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# THE INDYPENDENT

ISSUE #193: JANUARY 20–FEBRUARY 16, 2014

*A FREE PAPER FOR FREE PEOPLE*

## Imagine Living in a Socialist USA

ACCLAIMED NEW BOOK SAYS “YES, WE CAN.”

FRED ASKEW

BOOK LAUNCH PARTY

***IMAGINE LIVING IN A SOCIALIST USA***

**JANUARY 27 • 7 PM • FREE**

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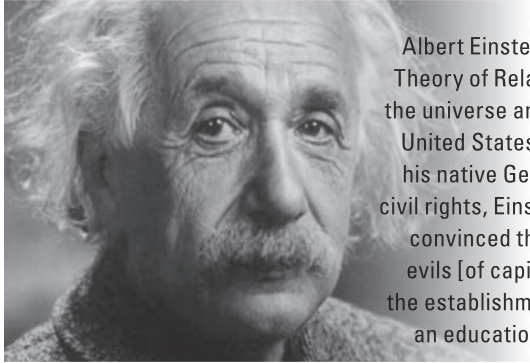
*Speakers: FRANCES FOX PIVEN, JUAN GONZALEZ, BLANCHE WIESEN COOK, FRANCES GOLDIN,  
DEBBY SMITH & MICHAEL STEVEN SMITH*



*“Socialism could be defined as economic democracy. It means rule by people over the economic structures and resources that we need to keep ourselves alive and healthy, to engage in creative activity, to maintain good relationships with one another, and to have good and meaningful lives”*— PAUL LE BLANC from *IMAGINE: LIVING IN A SOCIALIST USA*

## LOOK WHO WAS A SOCIALIST

With the “S” word banished to the margins of political discourse, it’s often forgotten how many prominent Americans have been socialists, including these six individuals:

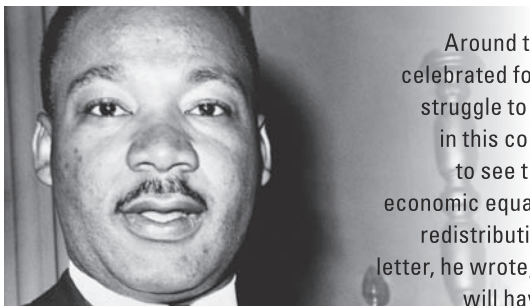


### WORLD FAMOUS PHYSICIST

Albert Einstein is renowned as a scientific genius whose Theory of Relativity transformed human understanding of the universe and how it works. He took up residence in the United States in 1933 after fleeing the rise of the Nazis in his native Germany. A lifelong pacifist and a supporter of civil rights, Einstein had strongly held political views. “I am convinced there is only one way to eliminate [the] grave evils [of capitalism],” he wrote in 1949, “namely through the establishment of a socialist economy, accompanied by an educational system which would be oriented toward social goals.”

### BLIND BUT COULD SEE

Helen Keller became the first deaf and blind person to graduate from college in 1904, and her story of personal perseverance quickly made her a beloved national figure. An intellectual virtuoso who could read in three languages with her hands, Keller was the author of numerous books. In 1912 she came out as a supporter of both the Socialist Party and the anarchist Industrial Workers of the World. She was denounced in the press but persisted in her campaign against what she described as the “industrial blindness and social deafness” of capitalism.

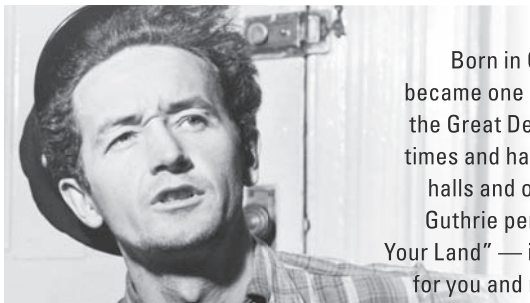


### CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

Around this time every year Martin Luther King Jr. is celebrated for his role as a civil rights leader who led the struggle to end the system of formal racial segregation in this country. Little noted is the fact that King came to see that winning legal equality did not guarantee economic equality and he began to advocate for a massive redistribution of wealth and power in society. In a 1965 letter, he wrote, “If we are to achieve real equality, the U.S. will have to adopt a modified system of socialism.”

### FREE LOVE & FREE SPEECH

Calling herself a “communist anarchist,” Emma Goldman became the most famous symbol of working-class militancy and female revolt in America in the pre-World War I era. From her base in the Lower East Side, Goldman barnstormed the country speaking before crowds. She was a courageous fighter against police harassment and a daring lecturer on free love, the right to birth control and homosexual rights.



### DUST BOWL TROUBADOUR

Born in Okemah, Oklahoma, in 1912, Woody Guthrie became one of America’s most popular musicians during the Great Depression with his Dust Bowl ballads of hard times and hard people. He frequently performed in union halls and on picket lines with his protégé Pete Seeger. Guthrie penned his most famous song — “This Land Is Your Land” — in 1940. When he sang “This land was made for you and me,” he did so as a committed socialist who believed the wealth of society should be held commonly.

### PIONEERING NURSE

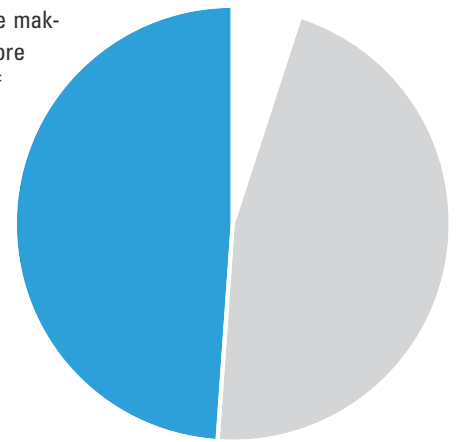
Public health nursing combines a concern for individual health experiences with knowledge of the community in which a patient lives. This approach to nursing was pioneered by Lillian Wald, a gifted organizer who founded the Henry Street Settlement in 1893 to serve immigrants who were crowded into New York’s Lower East Side. She also launched the Visiting Home Nurse Service. An early advocate of a system of national health insurance, Wald was also a strong supporter of racial integration and a leading opponent of the U.S. entry into World War I.



## YOUNG PEOPLE MORE LIKELY TO FAVOR SOCIALISM OVER CAPITALISM

Faced with soaring student loan debt, bleak job prospects and a looming global environmental crisis, young Americans favor socialism over capitalism, according to a national survey by the Pew Research Center. Conducted in December 2011, the poll sought to measure sentiments toward different political labels. In the 18–29 age bracket, 49 percent said they had a positive reaction to socialism versus 46 percent for capitalism.

The Pew survey also found substantial support for socialism over capitalism among people of color. Fifty-five percent of African-Americans had a positive reaction to socialism, versus 41 percent to capitalism. Among Latinos, it was 44 percent for socialism, 32 percent for capitalism. By a 43-22 percent margin, the poll also showed that socialism was almost twice as popular with people making under \$30,000 per year as with those earning more than \$75,000 per year. Support for socialism fell off dramatically among whites (24 percent supporting) and people 65 years and older (13 percent supporting). Overall, 31 percent of Americans said they had a positive reaction to socialism, a strong showing for an idea that politicians and the media have scorned for decades.



### PEOPLE 18–29

### POSITIVE SOCIALISM

### POSITIVE CAPITALISM



Socialists routinely won local elections in the United States during the first two decades of the 20th century, before their movement was crushed by government repression. For Kshama Sawant, that kind of electoral success need not be just for the history books. In November, Sawant, 41, drew national attention when she knocked off a four-term Democratic incumbent in a citywide race for a Seattle City Council seat while running openly as a socialist. Her campaign mobilized hundreds of volunteers. She received neither corporate campaign donations nor the support of the city’s liberal political establishment.

“This moment belongs to that way of organizing,” she told cheering supporters after being named the winner in the race.

Sawant teaches economics at a local community college and was active in Occupy Seattle. She ran on a platform calling for a citywide minimum wage of \$15 per hour, rent control for tenants and a tax on millionaires to improve public services.

Since her election, she hasn’t stopped pushing the political envelope. At a November 18 rally for Boeing workers facing job losses if they didn’t accede to company demands for concessions, Sawant denounced Boeing for carrying out “economic terrorism.” She then made headlines across the country by suggesting that if the company took flight, workers should seize control of their factory and run it themselves.

“The only response we can have if Boeing executives do not agree to keep the plant here,” she said, “is for the machinists to say the machines are here, the workers are here, we will do the job, we don’t need the executives. The executives don’t do the work, the machinists do.”

In early January, Seattle’s new mayor created a commission to study the possibility of enacting a \$15 minimum wage. Sawant has vowed to collect enough petition signatures to put the issue on the ballot next fall if the Seattle City Council does not act before then.



# THE INDYPENDENT

Issue #193, January 20–February 16, 2014  
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## Making School Fun Again

NEW NYC SCHOOLS CHIEF CARMEN FARIÑA WANTS TO 'PUT THE JOY' BACK IN EDUCATION. CAN SHE PULL IT OFF?

By Brian Jones, p4

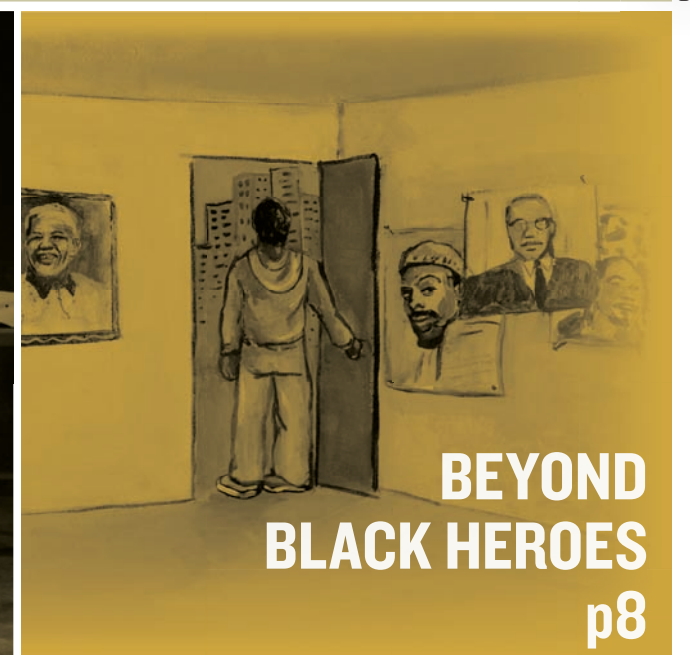
GARY MARTIN



NEW YORK'S LAME  
POT REFORM  
p3



HEALTH CARE  
THEATER  
p15



BEYOND  
BLACK HEROES  
p8





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*The Independent* is a New York-based free newspaper published 13 times a year on Mondays for our print and online audience of more than 100,000 readers. It is produced by a network of volunteers who report, write, edit, draw, design, take photos, distribute, fundraise and provide website management. Since 2000, more than 700 journalists, artists and media activists have participated in this project. Winner of more than 50 New York Community Media Alliance awards, *The Independent* is funded by subscriptions, reader donations, merchandise sales, benefits and advertising. We accept submissions that look at news and culture through a critical lens, exploring how systems of power — economic, political and social — affect the lives of people locally and globally. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity.

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## community calendar

### THROUGH FEB 14

Mon–Fri 11am–5pm • Free  
EXHIBITION: FOR & ABOUT: ART & REACTIONS TO SUPERSTORM SANDY. Group show features artwork by 14 Brooklyn artists commemorating the first anniversary of Sandy. The exhibition includes work made for those who were and continue to be affected by the storm.  
Brooklyn Arts Council  
55 Washington St, Suite 218, Bklyn  
718-625-0800 • brooklynartscouncil.org

### THROUGH FEB 27

Mon–Fri 9am–5pm • Free  
EXHIBITION: THE MARCH. An exhibition of work from seventeen artists, coordinated by NYC Parks' Ebony Society, that reflects the struggles and victories of the Civil Rights Movement.  
Arsenal Gallery Exhibits, Arsenal Building  
Central Park  
830 5th Ave  
212-360-8163 • nycgovparks.org

### FRI JAN 31

6:30pm • Free  
DISCUSSION: *THE INVENTION OF THE WHITE RACE*. Focus will be on Theodore Allen's classic book, which tells the story of how America's ruling class created the category of the "white race" as a means of social control. Jeffrey Perry, who wrote the forward, will facilitate.  
WORD Bookstore  
126 Franklin St, Bklyn  
718-624-5921 • brooklynpeace.org

### THU FEB 6

7pm • Free  
PERFORMANCE: THE OKCUPID SHOW: STORIES OF LOVE, SEX AND THE INTERNET. New York comedians, writers and actors spinning true tales, sordid and sweet, about their experiences using the "Best dating site on earth."  
Housing Works Bookstore & Café  
126 Crosby St  
347-473-7400 • housingworks.org

### FRI FEB 7

5:30–7:30pm • Free  
PERFORMANCE: JAN BELL AND THE MAYBELLS. Jalopy Theatre presents Jan Bell and the Maybells performing songs from their latest album, *Dream of the Miner's Child*, tracing the link between Celtic, Appalachian and Bell's original songs rooted in her English childhood.  
American Folk Art Museum  
2 Lincoln Sq, Columbus Ave at 66th St  
212-595-9533 • folkartmuseum.org

### TUE FEB 11

8pm • Free  
SCREENING: *PUSSY RIOT, A PUNK PRAYER*. Join Time's Up for popcorn, beer and the Oscar-nominated and Russian-banned film about the punk activists who stood up to Putin and religious orthodoxy and were sent to Siberia for it. Short films about the group FEMME will also be shown.  
99 S 6th St, Bklyn  
212-802-8222 • times-up.org

### WED FEB 12

6:30pm • Free  
ARTS, CRAFTS & ACTIVISM: HEALTH CARE FOR ALL TRANSJUSTICE CAMPAIGN: SILK SCREENING PARTY. Join the Sylvia Rivera Law Project and TransJustice of the Audre Lorde Project as they get ready for a radical action advocating trans and gender non-conforming health care reform. Bring a shirt, bag, hat, sweatshirt or anything else you'd like to silkscreen.  
The Audre Lorde Project  
147 W 24th St, 3rd Fl  
212-463-0342 • alp.org

### THU FEB 13

6pm • \$5  
WORKSHOP: COMPOSTING INDOORS WITH RED WIGGLER WORMS. In this hands-on workshop, the NYC Compost Project will demonstrate how to set up and maintain an indoor worm bin. Turn your kitchen scrap into organic fertilizer and reduce your carbon footprint!  
Lower East Side Ecology Center  
273 Bowery  
212-477-4022 • leseecologycenter.org

### THU FEB 13

7pm • \$10  
SCREENING: *FOOL'S ALLEY*. Based on famed Egyptian author Naguib Mahfouz's story *Fool's Alley*, filmmaker Tawfik Saleh's work is both social commentary and traditional love story, chronicling the misadventures of a working-class Cairo enclave whose inhabitants go crazy when the neighborhood nut wins the lottery.  
Alwan for the Arts  
16 Beaver St, 4th Fl  
646-732-3261 • alwanforthearts.org

### FRI FEB 14

6pm • \$2 suggested donation  
SCREENING: *GLORY*. As part of their "Labor Goes to the Movies" series, the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY will screen this historical film, which relates the story of the first black Union Army regiment, the legendary 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Clarence Taylor, Baruch College and CUNY Grad Center Professor of History, will also speak.  
PSC CUNY Union Hall  
61 Broadway, 16th Fl  
212-354-1252 x 270 • psc-cuny.org

### SAT FEB 15

9:30am–3pm • Free  
LECTURE: TENDING THE LIGHT: COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & THE MODERN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Mississippi Freedom Summer and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this conference will focus on the grassroots efforts of those who drove the struggle for Civil Rights during the 1960s.  
The Paul Robeson Campus Center, Rutgers University  
350 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
Newark, NJ  
973-353-3896 • rutgers.edu

### SAT FEB 15

8pm • \$18  
MUSIC: FAITH NOLAN AND THE BULL DAG-

# JAN—FEB

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### WED, JAN 29 • 7:30PM

VENEZUELA AFTER CHÁVEZ: A LEFT ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

With George Cicariello-Maher & Greg Wilpert

Moderated by Gerardo Renique

Sliding scale: \$6/\$10/\$15

### WED, FEB 5 • 7:30PM

ANGER AND ACTIVISM: FIRE AND FUEL

Panelists: Sumitra Rajkumar, Jay Toole, Penny Arcade, Ethan

Nichtern & Gaurav Jashnani. Facilitated by Lisa Garrett of Roadmap Consulting

Co-hosted by the Third Root Education Exchange

Sliding scale: \$6/\$10/\$15

### THU, FEB 6 • 7:30PM

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Nelson Mandela: Lessons for Palestine, Political Prisoners, and Economic Justice

With Glen Ford, Laura Whitehorn, and Joel Kovel

Co-sponsored by the Committee for Open Discussion of Zionism

Sliding scale: \$6/\$10/\$15

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BUILDING  
A MOVEMENT  
THAT MOVES

The Brecht Forum @ The Commons  
388 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn  
(Between Bond & Hoyt Streets)

Please  
register online:

**brechtforum.org**  
**212-242-4201**

### ONGOING: WED–SUN

12pm–5pm • \$6  
EXHIBITION: IN PURSUIT OF FREEDOM. Learn about the unsung heroes of Brooklyn's anti-slavery movement — ordinary residents, black and white — who shaped their neighborhoods, city and nation with a revolutionary vision of freedom and equality. Includes an original copy of the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln.  
Brooklyn Historical Society  
128 Pierrepont St, Bklyn  
718-222-4111 • brooklynhistory.org



**BEATRICE ERPHA WOLF BAUMER WAS BORN JANUARY 2, 2014 TO LONGTIME INDYPENDENT VOLUNTEERS AMY WOLF AND BENNETT BAUMER. CONGRATULATIONS AMY AND BENNETT!**



# Cuomo's Smokescreen

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

On January 8, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that he would create a state medical-marijuana program by executive order. The news surprised both legislators and activists, as Cuomo had opposed even the restrictive therapeutic-cannabis bill the Assembly passed last year. For all the hoopla, however, his scheme may never supply herb to any actual sick people. It revives a 1980-vintage state program that obtained low-quality medical marijuana from the federal government — and ended after the Reagan administration cut off the supply. And while even the narrowest state medical-pot laws permit use by people with multiple sclerosis or AIDS, Cuomo's proposal is currently limited to those with cancer or glaucoma.

For a state with a reputation for being progressive on social issues, New York lags far behind on this one. In Colorado, state-licensed pot sales to adults began on January 1, and Washington will follow this summer. Since 1996, 21 states and Washington, D.C. have enacted laws permitting at least some medical use. New York's distinction is that it regularly leads the nation in pot-possession arrests.

So why has it been so hard to get the laws changed here? There are three main reasons. First, New York, unlike Colorado and California, does not have ballot initiatives, so any change in the laws has to come through the notoriously dysfunctional state legislature. Second, it has not had a strong legalization movement since the 1970s, although that may be changing. Third, New York's reputation as "progressive" is significantly overrated.

Legislators are much more cautious than voters, especially on an issue that makes them vulnerable to attack ads and gotcha memes. They also have to compromise with opponents. Eight of the first nine states to legalize medical marijuana, beginning with California in 1996, did it by initiative. Colorado and Washington's legalization of retail sales also came by initiative, in 2012.

The state laws enacted by legislation are all much more restrictive. In New Jersey, a committee chair got chronic pain deleted from the list of conditions qualifying for medical marijuana, and New Hampshire's governor said she would veto a bill that let patients grow their own.

In New York, the state Senate is gerrymandered for a majority of Republicans or a coalition with real-estate-bought Democrats, so it is often the graveyard of progressive legislation. The Assembly has passed medical marijuana

measures several times, but they have remained "one-house bills."

What's more, beyond the national problem that only a small minority of pot users are even minimally politically active on the issue, New York's legalization movement faces distinctive local problems. It's hard to organize across regions as disparate as Buffalo and Long Island. The state's pot subcultures are much more fragmented than California's, where the movement had a base in the farmers of the Emerald Triangle and among post-hippie gay activists during the AIDS epidemic. Here, there are huge economic and cultural gaps between a baby-boomer lawyer on the Upper West Side and a 19-year-old in Brownsville popped in a stop-and-frisk. In the states where medical marijuana is semi-legal, that also generates money that can be put into the cause. California dispensary owner Richard Lee put \$1.5 million into the 2010 legalization initiative Proposition 19.

The legalization movement here has gained strength in the last few years, with the New York Civil Liberties Union and the state Drug Policy Alliance focusing on marijuana issues, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) sustaining a handful of chapters and groups like Community Voices Heard bringing black and Latino activists into what has been a very white movement. One might almost be grateful to mayors Rudolph Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg, whose pot-bust policies were so heavy-handed and blatantly racial that they eventually galvanized opposition.

On the other hand, progressive local politicians such as City Councilmembers Melissa Mark-Viverito and Jumaane Williams, who have protested those policies, did so with the disclaimer that they weren't endorsing legalization. Mayor Bill de Blasio has not come out for anything stronger than reducing penalties for possession "in public view" — a measure supported and then abandoned by Gov. Cuomo.

## NOT SO PROGRESSIVE

Finally, New York is not as progressive as people think it is on social issues. Although it decriminalized pot in 1977, its 1973 "Rockefeller laws" pioneered the era of draconian mandatory-minimum sentences for drug offenders. In a similar vein, although it was one of the four states that legalized abortion on demand before the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling, New York was the last to legalize no-fault divorce, in which cou-

ples can split up without accusing the other of adultery or abuse; it did not do so until 2010. The law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation was first introduced in 1971 — and didn't make it through the legislature until 2002.

In the Stonewall era, gay men and lesbians were bigger pariahs than pot-smokers, but their rights are now widely accepted. The difference, NORML founder Keith Stroup said in 2003, was that millions of them had the courage to come out. Marijuana users who come out risk arrest, unemployment and being declared unfit parents. President Obama can mock and dismiss legalization without being widely denounced as a duck-brained puritan.

Drugs are also not purely a "social issue." In New York, they're politically intertwined with crime, which is deeply intertwined with race.

While the city didn't escalate pot busts to more than 25,000 a year until 1998, after serious crime had fallen significantly, they have been an effective tool for harassing young, lower-class black and Latino men, who are perceived as the main sources of street crime. The more privileged feel safe.

That was former pothead Michael Bloomberg's rationale for hypocrisy. His attitude was essentially "I enjoyed it, but we need to keep a lid on the animals." (Cuomo admits that he "did experiment with marijuana when [he] was a youth," but dismisses state Sen. Liz Krueger's legalization bill as a "nonstarter.")

Despite all its legislative dysfunction, however, New York now has at least six senators (out of 63) who have endorsed legalization: Krueger and Brad Hoylman of Manhattan; Gustavo Rivera of the Bronx; and Martin Malavé Dilan, Velmanette Montgomery and Kevin Parker of Brooklyn. In the U.S. Senate, none have.



ANDY PUGH.COM

## THE INDY FUND DRIVE, NET NEUTRALITY & YOU

"Net neutrality is dead. Bow to Comcast and Verizon, your overlords." That was the headline on the *Los Angeles Times* website on January 14 hours after a federal appeals court shredded the Federal Communications Commission's latest attempt to guarantee an even playing field on the Internet.

The big Internet service providers have long sought to establish toll booths along the "information superhighway" and charge exorbitant fees to websites for speedy delivery of their content. Those who can't "pay to play," or who fall out of favor for any reason or no reason at all, would be relegated to the digital equivalent of a dirt road. In making its case, Verizon insisted that net neutrality trampled on the company's free speech rights. Internet advocates hope that Obama's FCC will find a way to rewrite net neutrality rules to placate the courts. But that's far from a sure thing.

So what does this have to do with *The Independent*? Quite a lot, actually. The prospect of a privatized, fenced-off Internet makes it that much more imperative that a print publication like this one continues to grow and thrive. Thanks to the gen-

erosity of our readers, we have raised more than \$13,000 in our annual winter fund drive. Please help us blow through our goal of \$15,000 by the time we wrap up the drive on February 1. More than ever, this is the time to show your support not just for the Indy, but for the ideal that all people are entitled to a free and vibrant media system.

## IN SOLIDARITY, THE EDITORS

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# Carmen Fariña in Charge

## WHAT STANCE SHOULD EDUCATORS AND ACTIVISTS TAKE TOWARD THE NEW CHANCELLOR?

BY BRIAN JONES

An educator has been put in charge of New York City's Department of Education. With 1.1 million students in some 1,700 schools, the Big Apple has the largest K-12 school system in the country. Carmen Fariña, the new chancellor, has worked in the public schools for 40 years. She has been a teacher, a principal, a superintendent and a deputy chancellor. Although Fariña's appointment has elicited strong responses — cheers from the ranks of progressive educators and jeers from the corporate education “reform” crowd — it may not be time for activists to lay down their picket signs just yet.

Fariña's predecessors were largely recruited from the corporate reform camp. They favored applying free market ideas to schools: more competition based on standardized test scores, more “choice,” more reliance on private vendors and education “providers” and, crucially, fewer unionized teachers. To build a cadre of educational administrators devoted to these principles, the corporate reformers have had to look largely outside of the pool of people who have actually taught. In some cases, they thought the less experience, the better. For the past 12 years, New York City has epitomized this trend. Added together, the years of K-12 classroom teaching experience of the last three NYC schools chancellors — Dennis Walcott, Cathy Black and Joel Klein — was nearly zero.

Chancellor Fariña and Mayor de Blasio are on record as critics of some of the hallmark education “reforms” from the Bloomberg era: especially the reliance on standardized tests as the ultimate arbiter of student progress and teacher effectiveness. Whereas previous administrations closed schools with callous disregard for community input, de Blasio has promised a moratorium on school closures and Fariña has vowed to make all parents feel welcome in the schools.

“We're going to have a system here, where parents are seen as real partners,” she said.

### ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE

Many progressives and educators are enthusiastic about the appointment, and are optimistic about the direction Fariña is likely to take as chancellor.

“She is what she seems to be,” said Dr. Nicholas Michelli, professor of education at the City University of New York Gradu-

ate Center, “genuine, progressive and open.”

Education historian Diane Ravitch called Fariña's appointment “a new day in New York City.” “The era of punishing, blaming, and shaming professional educators is over,” she wrote.

Citing Fariña's 22 years in the classroom, Julie Cavanagh, a special education teacher at PS 15 in Brooklyn and member of the Movement of Rank and File Educators (MORE) said, “She was a teacher. She gets it.” Cavanagh added, “We have a lot of reasons to be hopeful. We will see parent empowerment, democracy and those kinds of things come back to public education in NYC.”

On the other hand, those who favor free-market-oriented (also known as “corporate”) education reform have expressed skepticism about Fariña's appointment. In an editorial, the *Wall Street Journal* called her a “competent steward of the failing status quo.” Infamous charter school CEO Eva Moskowitz praised Fariña as “an educator who cares” but questioned whether she would allow more charter schools to open.

Joe Williams, executive director of the pro-corporate reform group Democrats for Education Reform told the *Washington Monthly* that Fariña is not likely to reverse the changes of the past decade. “The Bloomberg haters are going to have to settle for a change in style rather than major changes in substance,” he said. “Rich kids will continue to have good public school options; poor kids will play the lottery.”

### FARIÑA'S HISTORY

Is Fariña's appointment more a shift in style than substance? A review of her career in New York's public schools may offer some clues.

At her appointment ceremony, Fariña emphasized her own story as a student in the public schools. The painful experience of having her name mispronounced and being marked absent under the wrong name was a defining one. For Christina Fuentes, a DOE director of English Language Learner Instruction, the prospect of a chancellor who understands

the importance of respecting the cultures and languages of New York City's students is thrilling. “I was heartened by what Carmen said about the need to see second languages as an asset and not a deficit — that's great,” she said. “I'm excited about the possibilities of doing second language acquisition right, and making it attractive to everyone.”

Fariña was a teacher for most of her career, but when she became a principal in District 2, she was part of a massive — and controversial — reform effort under the leadership of district superintendent Anthony Alvarado. In her book, *Death and Life of the Great American School System*, Ravitch recounts the process by which standards-based reforms (some of which are ostensibly progressive, such as “Balanced Literacy” and a constructivist approach to math) were implemented in a heavy-handed way throughout the district, disregarding concerns and complaints from parents and teachers. At the same time, Fariña's widely praised effort to turn around her own school, PS 6, involved turning over 80 percent of the staff and recruiting wealthy parents to pad the budget.

The plot thickened when researchers and politicians seized on the test scores of some of District 2's schools and decided that the achievement gap had been “solved.” As Dr. Lois Weiner, a professor of education at New Jersey City University, pointed out at the time, researchers acting more like “cheerleaders” overlooked the fact that District 2 was rapidly becoming one of the wealthiest districts in the United States (not just in New York City), and that the wealthiest and whitest students had the highest scores, while the poorest schools with the most non-white students had the lowest scores.

Nevertheless, this very same educational model was exported to San Diego, and later re-imported to New York City by none other

than Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his first schools chancellor, Joel Klein. Under Klein, Fariña rose to the rank of superintendent. There is some evidence that, at the time, Fariña embraced Klein's appetite for “creative disruption” as a means of education reform.

In 2003, Fariña was quoted in *Business Week* praising the infamous CEO of General Electric whose management style was hailed by Bloomberg as an ideal model for running New York City schools. “Jack Welch said one thing that really struck me,” Fariña said. “You can't allow an organization to grow complacent. When you find those kinds of organizations, you have to tear them apart and create chaos. That chaos creates a sense of urgency, and that sense of urgency will ultimately bring [about] improvement.” The chancellor's office did not respond to an offer to comment on that statement.

Fariña's emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning is refreshing, but may come at the expense of other issues that stakeholders care about, such as class size. In 2005, when then-City Councilmember Eva Moskowitz called for a report on class sizes throughout New York City, Fariña, now elevated to the rank of deputy chancellor, testified that while she favored reducing class size in general, she was opposed to mandating lower classes in the city. Instead, she favored giving school leadership teams flexibility on how to use those funds, arguing that ultimately “teacher quality trumps everything.”

Fariña retired in 2006, citing philosophical differences with Bloomberg, but remained involved in education. After PS 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn, was co-located with a charter school, Fariña chaired the Friends of PS 15 Committee, which tried to publicize the school and bring in donors to support its growth and expansion. A new library in PS 15 is the result of this committee's work and “Carmen's Corner” — filled with books donated in her name — is an indication of her role in the effort. When another District 15 school, the School for Global Studies, was selected as a site for co-location with one of Moskowitz's Success Academies, Fariña suggested that the introduction of a new early childhood center would be a better way to meet the needs of the community. Both of these efforts earned Fariña a reputation as someone who sought creative alternatives to competitive co-locations. Given this history and Mayor de Blasio's softening rhetoric on charter schools (from charging rent to charging rent to “those that can afford it”), it seems likely that the mayor and chan-

Carmen Fariña

### WHAT DO WE WANT CHANCELLOR FARIÑA TO DO IN 2014?

(Crowd-sourced from social media.)

- Place a moratorium on school closures.
- Stop ranking schools by letter grades.
- Get rid of the Danielson rubric, or use it appropriately — to

help teachers develop, not as a high-stakes evaluation.

- Get rid of “talent coaches” (DOE officials who teach principals how to evaluate teachers).
- Allow more time for teacher preparation and collaboration during the school day.
- Promote democratic, parent and community decision-making power at the school level.
- Crack down on abusive, capri-

cious building leaders.

- Provide bi/multi-lingual education for every child.
- Replace Teachers for America and Teaching Fellows with “Grow Your Own” programs to recruit and train teachers of color from New York City.
- End contracts with Pearson and stop hiring expensive contractors for endless data gathering and data management, and use savings to fund:
- More art, more music, more

drama and more physical education in schools.

- Smaller class sizes.
- Full-time assistants in every classroom pre-K to second grade.
- Healthier food options in school cafeterias.
- The return of team sports.
- Paid maternity and paternity leaves.

— BRIAN JONES





**THE FUTURE IS NOW:** A New York City school student participates in a protest against standardized testing held outside the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C.

cellor will neither promote charter schools (as the last three chancellors did) nor directly confront their powerful backers.

### DEMOCRATIC PARTY AGENDA

Fariña may try to distance herself from the Bloomberg agenda, but its main tenets are also the agenda of the Democratic Party. From the White House to the Governor's Mansion, the Democrats have thoroughly embraced nearly everything that New Yorkers came to associate with Bloomberg: the Common Core standards; evaluating students, teachers, and schools primarily by standardized test scores; closing schools with low scores; promoting charter schools; and encouraging market competition as the driving force of reform.

Municipal leaders across the country have, in some cities, bypassed democratic structures by granting mayoral control over the schools. Neither de Blasio nor Fariña have spoken against mayoral control. Sam Anderson, a member of the Coalition for Public Education and the Independent Commission on Public Education (iCOPE) suspects Fariña will carry out "business as usual with a different style." "We have to be about reconstruction," he said. "Like the radical Republicans did after the Civil War — you can't reconstruct in a democratic way if you maintain mayoral control."

Still, Fariña portrays herself as someone who will bring a different ethos to the school system. She has said that she opposes competition in education, and seems to have backed that up in practice. Zipporah Mills, principal of PS 261 in the Boerum Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn, credits Fariña with instituting collaboration as policy.

"A lot of the things that are now regular practice in the schools are her creation," Mills said. "Teacher study groups, visiting each other's schools, sharing best practices — those are

things that were almost non-existent as policy before Carmen."

### TROUBLING SIGNS

But as *The Independent* went to press, the Department of Education seemed poised to increase competition between schools by following through with Bloomberg-era plans to roll out the Kindergarten Connect system — an online application process that pits every one of the roughly 900 kindergarten classrooms citywide against each other. The system uses algorithms developed by the Institute for Innovation on Public School Choice to "match" students to schools based on parent rankings. But only the DOE will be able to decide which student can attend which school. In a letter to the chancellor, several public school parents (including some elected parent representatives) from across the city pointed out that this program will disempower parents who don't have the language or technical skills to navigate the online process and will potentially push many parents towards charter and private schools, since it results in the selection of a single, take-it-or-leave-it school "match" for each child.

Fariña says that she opposes the overuse of high-stakes standardized tests, but some of their uses are beyond her control. Evaluating teachers by test scores is now mandated by state law, for example, and federal policy requires standardized testing for grades 3-8 and for high school graduation.

As of this writing, Fariña has not spoken publicly in favor of City Council Resolution 1394, which would place a moratorium on all high-stakes testing in New York City. Additionally, some who have high hopes in Fariña were alarmed to learn that she supports the new standards. "My biggest concern about her is her support of Common Core State Standards, which have not been proven to work and there is no safety net if they fail,"

said Diana Zavala, a District 6 parent who is also a member of the anti-testing activist group Change the Stakes.

Mayor de Blasio has said that he will impose a moratorium on school closures and abolish the letter grading system for schools. Those are welcome changes. School closings are precisely the kind of "chaos" that has led to so much demoralization among parents and teachers, and the fact that schools were graded on a curve guaranteed that a predetermined percentage of them would be labeled as failures each year.

Some of the proof of the new administration's progressivism will be in its handling of labor contracts. Mayor de Blasio has spoken forcefully about economic inequality, but seems disinclined to grant retroactive pay raises to the 300,000 city employees — nurses, firefighters, sanitation workers, teachers and so on — working without a new contract for as long as the last five years. On the flip side, the Bloomberg administration was infamous for wasting millions on no-bid contracts with private vendors. How Fariña's distaste for standardized testing abuse collides with New York State's \$32 million contract with test publishing behemoth Pearson, Inc. will be revealing.

Furthermore, just before the clock ran out on the previous administration, the DOE put out a call for proposals for the development of standardized tests for early childhood grades. Although top DOE officials have gone on record opposing standardized testing in early grades, the contract solicitation calls for "Computer Adaptive Testing" software graded by artificial intelligence for pre-K through second grade. Will Fariña put a stop to the proliferation of these tests in early grades?

Some educators suspect Fariña's administration — even if it rolls back some of the excessive abuses of standardized testing — won't go far enough. "The challenge," Dr. Weiner said, "is to do what wasn't done in District 2 and still has not been done: to acknowledge and confront the contradictions of class and race in the school system today."

### PUSHING FOR REAL REFORM

Whether Fariña's term as chancellor amounts to a change of style or substance remains to be seen — and is not entirely up to Fariña to decide. In the Bloomberg years, many parents, teachers and students felt they had no choice but to protest, march and picket to make themselves heard. Progressive faces in high places creates opportunities and dangers; opportunities, perhaps, to push for real reforms that were previously never under consideration and dangers in that a friendly face can more effectively demobilize us than a hostile one.

With Fariña at the helm, some people who care about specific issues — class size, standards, budget cuts — may experience pressure to be quiet so as not to embarrass "our chancellor." In truth, we're a long way from having the schools our children deserve, so this is not the time to be quiet. Now is the time to push for the full implementation of the promises

Fariña has already made and to continue to raise our own demands.

MORE, the social justice caucus of the UFT, is circulating a petition calling for full retroactive pay for municipal employees who have been working without a new contract for five years. iCOPE published an open letter to Mayor de Blasio listing 20 steps a progressive administration could take immediately to reverse Bloomberg's legacy and create a truly humane, democratic school system. The list includes a program for recruiting and training Black and Latino teachers from New York City, and opening an office of Multicultural Curricula. Citywide, activists are gearing up to teach even more parents about how to exercise their right to opt their children out of standardized tests.

Fariña has said that she wants to do reforms "with" people, not "to" them. If this truly is to be a new day for New York City schools, parents, teachers and students will have to hold her to that promise.

*Brian Jones taught elementary grades in New York City's public schools for nine years and is currently a doctoral student in urban education at the CUNY Graduate Center.*

### JOIN THE FIGHT FOR REAL REFORM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN NYC

#### MOVEMENT OF FRANK AND FILE EDUCATORS

The social justice caucus of the United Federation of Teachers.  
[morecaucusnyc.org](http://morecaucusnyc.org)

#### NEW YORK COLLECTIVE OF RADICAL EDUCATORS

A group of educators committed to fighting for social justice in school and society.  
[nycore.org](http://nycore.org)

#### CHANGE THE STAKES

A group of parents and educators who oppose the misuse of standardized tests.  
[changethestakes.wordpress.com](http://changethestakes.wordpress.com)

#### NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS

A blog of independent NYC public school parent voices, edited by Leonie Haimson.  
[nycpublicschoolparents.blogspot.com](http://nycpublicschoolparents.blogspot.com)

#### COALITION FOR EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE

Community-based organizations and unions fighting to end inequities in the public school system.  
[nyccej.org](http://nyccej.org)

#### TEACHERS UNITE

An independent membership organization of public school educators collaborating with youth and parents to transform the city's schools.  
[teachersunite.net](http://teachersunite.net)

#### COALITION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION/ COALICIÓN POR LA EDUCACIÓN PÚBLICA

An independent coalition fighting for democratic, quality public education for all children.  
[forpubliced.blogspot.com](http://forpubliced.blogspot.com)

#### INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

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— BRIAN JONES



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# Who Can Eat on \$136 per Month?

BY MAGGIE DICKINSON

Nothing marks the changing political winds in Washington more clearly than the current debate over the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In February 2009, Congress added \$19 billion to the food stamp program and renamed it SNAP as part of the stimulus legislation. At the time, President Obama and congressional Democrats argued that getting money into the hands of poor Americans was one of the quickest and surest ways to fix an ailing economy.

Just five short years later, Congress allowed the boost to SNAP benefits to expire, cutting \$11 a month from each of the 47 million Americans who currently receive the assistance. Now lawmakers are fighting over how much more to cut from the program, as the House and Senate attempt to reconcile their separate versions of the farm bill. The Senate's version contains a \$4 billion cut to SNAP, while the House has proposed cutting \$40 billion. Recent negotiations haven't yet produced a compromise, but Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow, a Democrat, has reportedly signaled that the Senate could live with a \$9 billion cut in order to pass the legislation.

There is little mystery about what this will mean for the poor and working New Yorkers who receive food stamp benefits. Before this most recent cut, a fifth of all New York City residents — 1.8 million people — received an average of \$147.45 per month in SNAP benefits. On November 1, that average benefit level automatically dropped to \$136.45 per month. But even before those cuts took effect, poor people struggled to feed themselves on an inadequate food budget. Researchers have found that most families used all of their food stamp benefits by the second week of the month.

## GROWING FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity has been on the rise in New York and nationally, despite the boost to benefit levels in 2009 and the expansion of the food stamp rolls. In 2012, 13.2 percent of all New York City residents were food insecure, up from 9.4 percent in 2000, according to the New York City Coalition Against Hunger. Nationally, food insecurity rose from 10.7 percent of all U.S. households in 2001 to 14.9 percent in 2011. Congress's proposed farm bills are poised to make these depressing statistics even more grim.

Though the food stamp rolls grew by 120 percent during Bloomberg's tenure, almost a quarter of those eligible for SNAP benefits in New York City — more than 250,000 families — still do not receive them. Local administration of the program has a profound

impact on participation rates, and New York's participation rate has increased from 64 percent in 2008 to 76 percent in 2010. Much of this improvement was among the working poor, an explicit target for SNAP outreach. The Bloomberg administration also eased the application process for working families in New York by allowing people to apply online and extending office hours at neighborhood food stamp centers.

However, Bloomberg also enforced federal policies that barred unemployed New Yorkers from receiving benefits unless they participated in the city's Work Experience Program — which requires beneficiaries to work at city agencies or community organizations — even when unemployment levels were as high as 10 percent. House Republicans are attempting to replicate this policy nationally by enforcing the work require-

ments for unemployed, able-bodied and childless adults, first introduced in the Clinton-era welfare reforms. So far, Senate Democrats have rejected this proposal. However, Republican governors like John Kasich of Ohio aren't waiting for Congress. Beginning January 1, 134,000 people became subject to being cut from the state's food stamp rolls unless, in the words of one affected Ohio resident, they agree to "work for food."

There are a few bright spots on the political horizon, both in New York and nationally. Mayor Bill de Blasio has signaled that he will accept the USDA's waiver for unemployed, childless adults, essentially waiving the work requirement for the 76,000 city residents who currently have to work for their SNAP benefits. In earlier farm bill negotiations, New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand proposed actually increasing SNAP benefit amounts by using the USDA's low-cost food plan instead of the thrifty food plan, a minimal diet plan that is currently used to set benefit levels.

This proposal did not make it into the Senate's final version of the farm bill. Instead, Senate Democrats passed a bill that cuts funds from an already inadequate anti-hunger program in a period of high food insecurity. The heady talk of stimulus has been replaced by calls for austerity from both sides of the aisle, and the cuts are hurting the poorest Americans, those least responsible for breaking the economy in the first place.

*New Yorkers who are not currently receiving benefits can apply online at [mybenefits.ny.gov](http://mybenefits.ny.gov) or visit their local Human Resources Administration office.*

*Maggie Dickinson is a doctoral student in anthropology at the CUNY Graduate Center. She is working on a dissertation about hunger and changing welfare policy in New York City.*



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# BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS IN A POST-HEROIC AGE

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

MANDELA DIED — I stared at the text and read it again, then again, the words zapping me as if I were licking a battery. From the train window, Long Island was an endless row of doll-houses. Again, I looked at the text and shook my head. Nelson Mandela’s wrinkled face lit up in my mind, then vanished. It felt like something precious was drained from my life. Shifting in my seat, I shook it off. It’s not like I wake up thinking of Mandela. There’s no poster of him on my walls, no Mandela book on my shelf. Last time I thought of him was during a preview for the film *Invictus*, starring Morgan Freeman as Mandela. It’s official, I thought, Morgan has been every important black man in history. Including God.

But as the train rocked along the tracks, I felt that sting again. As a teen visiting my friends, I sometimes saw a framed photo of Mandela on the wall, often next to Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. or a painting of Black Jesus. He was a hero in the Black freedom struggle, which was the reason we sat in a new home, drove new cars and wore new clothes on our backs. Between bites of dinner, I would lean back and study those photos, then ask my friends’ parents what they remembered of the struggle.

A heat rose in their voices. Whatever we had been talking about was pushed out of the way. Leaning over their plates, they told us of being afraid of whites, of being pelted with slurs and spit on if they were in the wrong neighborhood at the wrong time. They told us of being stopped by cops, frisked and threatened, stared at. They told us of the civil rights marches that shook the world. As they talked, I saw their faces light up.

Afterward, my friends and I would pile into a car and drive around town. A joint was passed as we talked about girls, sports and school, and the blurry future became more blurred with each inhale. Over and over, we came back to the stories of the struggle and hit dead air, words failed us as we sat in the car and stared at the dark streets, worried we’d never live up to that history.

At some point, someone always had to be dropped off in the ghetto to see a friend, get more weed or hook up with a girl. Fear knotted our chests as men on the corner eyed us, our car and our new clothes with hunger. The ragged homeless, looking like mummies, pushed shopping carts over broken sidewalks. Despair sat in the air.

And this was the weight that we, college-bound and privileged, were supposed to lift from the world. But how were we to do that? Hanging over us were the faces of Mandela, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and Black Jesus. It felt like they stared down at us from beyond the grave. In this spotlight of judgment, we leaned on the car and watched

our friend walk into the row of ghetto homes, each one with shattered windows like broken glass teeth.

I blinked the memory away as the train rolled into the Nostrand Avenue station. On the street was the familiar liquor store with a poster of a black woman on all fours in the window. Nearby a homeless man held out his hand. Shrugging him off, I passed by a bookstore as a video played in the window, showing a young imam who shouted, “All praise is to Allah! Let me hear you say it!” Out front a half-circle of junkies and drunks shouted with him, holding their hands up to the screen as if being warmed by a fire.

## INVISIBLE FACTORIES

Why do we need Mandela? Or Martin Luther King Jr. or Angela Davis, Malcolm X or Harriet Tubman? Why do we need heroes?

The first act of oppression is to divide us from our experience. “Nigger,” “faggot,” “bitch” — a whole vocabulary of dissociation cleaves us from our bodies and frames our desires as the source of our pain. Underneath the vocabulary are social roles — slave, sex worker, outcast or in general the Other — that we are trapped inside of. In this nauseated state, we hunger for a way out. Heroes are those men and women onto whom we transfer our faith in empowerment. They are mythic figures and each represents a different path to liberation. The history of African-American hero worship is a tug-of-war between giants in the halls of history: those who point toward integration, to the larger world, and those who close the gates and order our separation from the world in order to create our own.

Each generation has its heroes. And those faces, hanging above us, cast different judgments on our lives based on their politics. The direction of the freedom struggle takes form in this attempt to live up to the ideals emanating from their haloed faces. And unless you’ve been in those houses and at those dinners, heard the stories, you wouldn’t know that being “black” is not just an ethnic or racial identity but also a political one. It embraces the history, and almost requires a conversion experience.

Becoming “black” is work. No one is born a race. No one is a race. It is a political fiction, not a genetic reality. But it starts, for some us, with a shock. Students and friends tell me of their verbal branding; they were called “dark,” “darkness,” “midnight,” “shadow,” “tar baby” — basically anything that scalded their skin. And of course we grew up hearing “nigger,” “nigga,” “nig.” Most of didn’t say it in the house but waited till we got outside and threw the slur at each other like a dodge ball.

Black psychologist William Cross mapped out the stages of racial self-identification in his 1971 paper “The Negro-to-Black Conversion Experience.” In it he laid out five

stages of the process. The first, Pre-encounter, is a child’s sense of self before exposure to race. Next is the Encounter, in which an individual is hit with racism that “shocks” them into awareness. Third and fourth are Immersion and Emersion, during which an individual goes “full black” and clings to their group in racial solidarity, often like a see-saw that elevates all things “black” and devalues all things “white.” Afterward, solidarity plateaus and they open up to the world. Internalization, the last stage, comes when the individual becomes confident in their racial identity and balances it with their other identities. Cross designates this stage as a fork in the road: if an unhealthy balance results, the person abandons the Black freedom struggle for private life. Cross points toward a continuing commitment to political change as a truly life-affirming Black self.

Like all good scholars, Cross revised his schema after more research. Yet the basic stages hold true. Of course real life is not a clean arc of development. And the Black identity each generation assumes is shaped by the social forces its members contend with.

Imagine children emerging into the world, brown-skinned but not “Black,” not aware of the history that preceded them. Like invisible factories, discursive institutions transform them into a specific type of “Black” person. They enter a church or hang in the street, they come from the Caribbean or are middle-class or visit family in jail. More important than the physical buildings they enter is the language they acquire. It frames experience.

A discursive institution is organized knowledge rooted in language and acted out in a defined space. It is where they practice forms of “blackness,” each with different values, often one conflicting with the other. A cliché is the home versus the street, seen in the 2009 biopic *Notorious*, when Biggie Smalls as a teen changes clothes on the roof to hide his drug dealing from his mother.

Each discursive institution — the church, the street, etc — that transforms and regulates one’s social identity can move you through Cross’s racial identity scale or stall you at a stage. Essentially they are regressive or progressive. Today’s regressive discourses are the marginal but loud: Black cultural nationalism (sorry Harlem!), gangsta to corporate bling bling, Hip Hop, church-based sexism and class elitism in the form of prosperity theology and homophobia.

So when I first heard Amiri Baraka’s poem “Somebody Blew Up America” and the stupid line, “Who told 4000 Israeli workers to stay home that day,” and the mostly young, mostly Black audience clapped, I winced. It reduced “the Israeli” into a one-dimensional caricature defined by national identity. And I sensed it trapped youth of color in Cross’s third stage, Immersion, where everything black is good and everything white is bad. Baraka is part of an African-American tra-

dition that slips between group-affirmation and other-denigration; he usually and irritatingly framed others (whites, Jews, gays) as the source of evil, reducing their humanity to a single, false identity, telescoped by our own need for distance from the Other.

And when I first heard Snoop Dogg’s 1993 song “Ain’t No Fun (If the Homies Can’t Have None),” which basically is a gang rape anthem, I watched everyone’s heads bobbing to the beat and waited for someone to wake from the trance and say, “Hey, is this a rape song?” No one did.

Today is not much different. Music is one discursive institution overlapping with others, but where it met street culture and was sucked into corporate America, it became a regressive narrative of blackness. Not all Hip Hop but the most popular forms of it are sexist, materialistic, homophobic and work as commercials for the 1%. On the bus home, a teen was listening to a Lil Wayne rap song on his smartphone: “I’m so rich I go pour Champagne and don’t drink it / Ice on my neck like I fainted / These are the thoughts of the brainless.”

“Am I a Feminist or a Womanist?” Poet Staceyann Chin asked. “The student needs to know if I do men occasionally and primarily, am I lesbian?” In the classroom, people squirmed. On screen the YouTube video played, Chin recited a poem of loving women and how she feared rape, harassment and then being blamed for it. When it was over, I asked the students if they know anyone who was gay. Nearly everyone raised their hands. “Do any of you think your gay friend?” — I waited a second — “is going to Hell?”

Stunned, some shook their heads as if warding off a bad smell. Others got still, peeked around and said, “Yes.” A debate raged back and forth over what the Bible

meant and who had the right to interpret it until one student, female, with deep brown skin, raised her hand and said, “I’m gay. And no one is putting me in Hell. Ever.”

She has millions with her. In Black America a new generation is pouring into the spaces between the church and the street and claiming those spaces as queer, atheist, punk and poet. They are inheriting, recreating or building from the ground up progressive discursive institutions. Whether they are teen poets of color, going from Urban Word NYC to the Nuyorican Café, parishioners of Liberation Theology churches or the nose-plugged, head-thrashing music zealots at the Afro-punk festival, they are in places that encourage them to embrace their other identities, all the while staying focused on social justice.

Those places aren’t widespread. And yet they contain the small channel through which youth of color can find language that connects all their fragmented parts into a whole person. And to be a fully realized human being in a white and male supremacist, homophobic, late capitalist society is dangerous. Out of necessity the new rainbow youth are radical. They showed up at Occupy Wall Street or rallied at the Million Hoodie March after the Trayvon Martin verdict.

After the rallies, they go home. If they are gay, they risk their lives by holding hands with their lovers. The painful irony is that they most likely walk past Afrocentric bookstores with posters of Malcolm X or maybe now, in honor of his death, Amiri Baraka, two men who hid their own sexuality in order to be accepted as revolutionaries.

## THE FIRE NEXT TIME

When Amiri Baraka died, I remembered

these youths’ anxious silence and wondered, what he would say to them? What answers could he give? Last time I saw him perform, he swung his bebop rhythm voice, hitting the scales to a revolutionary battle cry. Old and stooped, he vibrated with intense energy like an engine, his droopy eyes flashing, cutting, dismissing and smiling with mischievous joy.

“Since the rich eat more / than anybody else / it is reasonable to assume,” he chanted, “they are more full of shit.” The room exploded in hard, bitter laughter and I wiped my mouth, feeling a twinge of guilt at the cheap shot. And it disturbed me. It sounded like we were crushing hard coal in our mouths. Our buried rage shot into open hate before subsiding again.

The fury of revenge, it tasted like hot sugar on the tongue. And even though Baraka’s politics split long ago from the cultural nationalism of, say, the Black Israelites, who shout on street corners about the “devil” and the one true God while looking like extras from the film *Gladiator*, he shares with them a taste for sweet fury. It is addictive because it sublimates pain into a self-righteousness rooted in the belief that one’s suffering is the central truth of life. Tragically, it often is. The danger comes when every unanswered question is read in the same exact way, as another symptom of oppression.

Of course inside Baraka’s voice is Malcolm X’s. No one in Generation X actually knew him, but we recycled him in the 1990s as an icon of militancy. He was our myth, a pure hero from the past whose murder was a guarantee of his truth. In college, I shoplifted his cassettes from Tower Records and played them endlessly in the dorm. One speech, Blacks in Africa, a call to race war, damn near hypnotized me. I pressed the ear-

phones tight as Malcolm X said, “In Morocco and Algeria they’re telling the white man to get out, in the Congo Lumumba told the white man to get out.”

And then his voice hit a threatening low. “And in South Africa they’re telling the white man to get out. He says he’s not going. But he’s got another thought coming. He’ll either walk out or swim out in his blood. He’ll walk out of his volition or swim out in his blood, because the Black Man has awakened. And the Black Man has united. And where there’s unity there’s strength. You don’t need any guns; you just need some unity and a blade when it gets dark. You don’t need any jets. You don’t need any battle ships. You don’t need any atomic bombs. All you need is darkness. Nightfall.”

## BROWN SKINS, BLACK MASKS

“How does it feel to be a problem?” I asked the class. A silent wave of emotion washed over their faces. Eyebrows bobbed up and down. Foreheads wrinkled like venetian blinds. On every desk was a copy of the 1903 book *The Souls of Black Folk*, the classic by W. E. B. Du Bois. We just read the scene when a white girl came to his New England school, looked at his brown skin and rudely ignored him; it hit Du Bois that he was “black.”

“When did you first know what your ‘race’ was?” I threaded my question like a needle to pop the pressure in the room.

“It wasn’t from white people,” a woman burst out. “It was from nigge — sorry, it was the kids calling me darkness or tar pit or midnight.”

“Right,” another student said and heads nodded, hummed yeses rose from them. “If you dark, they get on you, harass you,” she said and pulled her coat closed, crossing her

arms.

“Are you going to teach us about double consciousness again?” The question came from a male student in the back row. He then recited, in a robotic monotone, the famous passage, “It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others.”

The whole class roared, slapping their desks and laughing. I taught the concept every semester and was known in the college as Professor Double Consciousness. I eyed them as they cackled and said, “I’m going to fail you bastards.”

They palmed their chests and looked at each other in shock. “No, no, no, I’m not,” I said, “But how about a question. Let’s flip the double consciousness that Du Bois talked about in which a minority, specifically African-Americans, internalize how the majority, specifically white people, see them and each other. It’s real. It’s why some of you have been judged and judge others as too dark, too nappy, too ill na na.”

They giggled. “When have you looked at yourself from a ‘Black’ point of view?” I asked. “When have you internalized a viewpoint that showed you as beautiful or powerful or lovable because of your color, your race? If you know about double consciousness, do you have a black consciousness to heal yourself?”

A perplexed silence fell over the room. They looked up and around, down and up again. They searched themselves and as they did, the quiet stretched into anxiety.

“Do you have a black consciousness?” I asked again, a tone of sadness in my voice. And again it fell like a single piano note between them and me.

“Well, do you?”



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## MIDDLE EAST

# Revisiting the Arab Spring

**UP IN FLAMES:** An Egyptian woman tries to stop a military bulldozer from going forward during clashes that broke out as Egyptian security forces moved in to disperse supporters of Egypt's deposed president Mohamed Morsi in a huge protest camp August 14, 2013. The operation marked the beginning of a crackdown that has left hundreds of government opponents dead.

*Editor's Note: Three years ago this month, mass protest movements overthrew autocratic, pro-Western regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, igniting further protests across the Middle East. Dubbed the "Arab Spring," this series of popular uprisings raised great expectations for the future of the region's 400 million inhabitants. These days hope is in scarce supply, according to veteran Middle East correspondent David Enders.*

BY DAVID ENDERS

The first time I heard the term "spring" used to invoke hope for change in the Arab world was when Bashar Assad ascended the Syrian throne in 2000 upon the death of his father, Hafez. A few years later it was well established the younger Assad's expected reforms had succeeded only in turning Syria into an even less socially and economically equitable state — the powder keg that has now exploded so violently. So you'll excuse me for being less than optimistic when the term "Arab Spring" gained widespread usage in 2011. Rather than being his country's savior, Bashar Assad has killed more people in less time than his father and pursued a zero-sum strategy that may well leave the country fragmented. His manipulation of both a peaceful protest movement and extremist fighters who eventually became major players within the opposition has been brutal, but nothing short of a full-on endorsement of the politics that have ruled Syria for decades. The moment people began to demand the end of the regime, it was hard to imagine an outcome that didn't involve violence. But while Syria is the bloodiest example of a movement that was initially built around peaceful protest, it's hard to call much of what has happened a success.

### EGYPT 360

The debate over Syria — and much of the Arab Spring — has been clouded by a lack of understanding of the countries in question from the beginning.

Egypt has now turned a full 360 degrees, from the overthrow of a dictator to the creation of one. Along the way the police state that was modern Egypt never actually disappeared, and when threatened, it quietly outflanked the country's newly elected leaders, staged a coup and killed more people in a single day than any government in the country's history. They remain full-fledged allies of the United States. The military coup that deposed the elected Muslim Brotherhood government

was indeed supported by many Egyptians, in large part because of the rhetoric and actions of the Muslim Brotherhood once they were in power. But the crackdown that has followed the military coup, whether tacitly or loudly supported by many of the same activists who were once darlings of the West, has been expanding to include not just the Brotherhood but journalists and the very same pro-democracy activists who helped organize against Mubarak.

If there is any doubt about what has taken place, it is now likely that the general who led the coup will run for president, after Egyptians approved a referendum on a new constitution — one that guarantees the country's military rulers protection. After elections in which outcomes were anything but assured, the new constitutional referendum (the country's third since former president Hosni Mubarak was deposed in 2011) was written off by observers as a foregone conclusion. The government had already arrested opponents who urged a "no" vote on the documents.

Many of the more patient among us are fond of saying things like "revolutions take time" and pointing out that the people of France or the United States, for example, did not overthrow their oppressors in a fortnight. But Egypt's pro-democracy revolution is not a work in progress. It looks like a movement that has been stopped dead — in many cases, quite literally — in its tracks.

Libya, despite early pledges of strong international support for rebuilding the country, suffers from a power vacuum in which ordinary people are exposed to the whims of vigilantes and criminals while those with federalist ambitions have gone so far as to shut down much of the country's oil production, crippling the government.

Across the Middle East there is a common element of these countries' current elites struggling to maintain control of the machinery of states, militaries and economies. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood also represented a long-struggling middle class and underclass that has long been forcibly silenced or co-opted by Egypt's military rulers.

### GLIMMER OF HOPE

There is reason to hope — Tunisia's new constitution, unlike Egypt's, is being hailed as the most progressive in the region. But even that country is still struggling to address the root causes of its revolution. The neighborhood of Sidi Bouzeid, where a fruit vendor set himself on fire after one too many

shakedowns by local police and launched a revolution, remains as impoverished as it was three years ago.

From an international standpoint, such events can be vexing and confusing. It also lays bare what the United States considers core interests in the region — Egypt's military rulers did not face a serious threat of the cut-off of military aid, and in fact continued to receive such aid from the United States despite the crackdown. Proponents of intervention in Syria claim that the United States could have significantly affected events there, though it is uncertain whether that is the case. What is certain is that we are not meeting the demand for humanitarian aid.

For me, the entirety of the "Arab Spring" has come to be summed up in a few moments. One was in northern Syria, in May of last year. I was traveling with a group of fighters I had spent time with periodically over the course of a year during which they moved from having an arsenal of rifles and homemade bombs to being a highly organized and mobile fighting force with dozens of vehicles, including tanks and rocket batteries, fully capable of coordinated offensives against Syrian military installations. On my last trip in Syria I accompanied them on one such operation against a military airport. The operation itself had been declared in retribution for the slaughter of Sunni co-religionists by government forces in another province a few days prior.

One of the young fighters — he hadn't yet graduated from high school — manned an anti-aircraft rifle as a Syrian air force jet dove and fired, targeting him directly. From the house where I had taken cover with other fighters I watched as the young man spun round to face the jet, turned the gun toward the sky and returned fire. If he was scared, it didn't show.

Was he a liberated man? Certainly. But he was also fighting for his life. It had long since ceased to be about democracy, now it was about communities under siege and grievances that spanned generations. The nonviolent activists I knew had long since fled the country.

*David Enders is a producer at Al Jazeera America's Fault Lines. He was previously McClatchy Newspapers' Syria bureau chief and is the author of Baghdad Bulletin, available from University of Michigan Press.*

Fault Lines airs on Al Jazeera America Fridays at 9:30pm, Sundays at 7pm and on [america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/fault-lines.html](http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/fault-lines.html).



Ground zero for Ukraine's contested future is Kiev's Independence Square — *Maidan Nezalezhnosti*. Pro-European Union protesters have held the square week after week, in much the same fashion that their counterparts have done in recent years in Egypt, Greece, Spain and the Occupy movement.

The public backlash was sparked on November 29, when Ukraine's president Viktor Yanukovich turned his back on a comprehensive free-trade deal with the European Union for an unprecedented \$15 billion aid package from Putin's Russia. Hundreds of thousands of others turned out to the square on the weekends demanding the president's ouster, early elections and the release of jailed politician Yulia Tymoshenko, whose sentence is widely considered political payback (and whose release was a condition of the EU agreement). They were fed and sheltered by volunteers, who also kept the camp clean, ran a medical team and erected a stage that has served as the focal point of the uprising — and, secondarily, a site for concerts.

So when Ukraine's parliament cracked down on the legal, peaceful protests by passing sweeping laws against demonstrations on January 16, they did it out of desperation at months-long public outrage that has shown no signs of abating.

The uprising began as a demand for EU integration, but has since has morphed into a referendum on the state of Ukrainian society. Many have a deep dissatisfaction with the state of things in Ukraine. Cited concerns include, in no particular order: corruption, graft, income inequality and alcoholism.

At the time of writing in mid-January, the numbers of protesters were smaller — 50,000, down from 800,000 at the demonstrations' height in early December. But the anger remained.

The tug-of-war over Ukraine's future — driven by political actors within and powerful neighbors, Russia and the EU, without

— is now being witnessed by much of the world. But the country has a history of getting trampled while the world looks on. For the last several centuries, the territory of modern-day Ukraine shuttled between Russia and Poland. (Russia's name is derived from the name of the ancient Ukrainian state, *Kievan Rus'*.) After the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, and again during the Second World War, Ukrainian nationalists tried to establish independence, only to succumb to the USSR's pull. Ukraine suffered the brunt of Stalin's mass killings, which wiped out between 4 and 10 million people during the forced collectivization of farms in the 1930s. Peasants were starving while Russia exported a record amount of grain. The Nazis' killing spree across the Eastern front created the most casualties in Poland and Ukraine.

Eastern and Western powers with an eye to expansion have inevitably looked Ukraine-ward. And even those who weren't interested invariably stumbled through it, a region that sits like a large, lush carpet between the eastern edges of the EU and the western fringe of Russia. Why has this swath of land inspired such conflict? One of the most notable reasons is that Ukraine has the unfortunate luck of possessing substantial natural resources. Today, it is the largest agricultural producer in Europe. Though its economy is still recovering from the 2008 global economic crash, Ukraine remains the world's second-largest grain exporter, trailing only the United States.

Tellingly, while Ukraine emerged as a sovereign nation after the breakup of the USSR, its modern name can be translated as “borderland.” It still acts as a buffer between the European Union and Russia, and its position also makes it a geopolitical target for



**FROZEN OUT:** Ukrainian protesters who support closer ties with the European Union rally in the center of Kiev, the nation's capital.

both. Accompanying these competing influences outside are lingering ethnic divisions inside: ethnic Russians comprise some 17 percent of the population, and most live in eastern Ukraine. The population's split on the Europe/Russia question reflects these pressures: western Ukraine, including the capital, Kiev, overwhelmingly wants to join the EU. Eastern Ukraine is mostly pro-Russian in its sentiments.

Many Ukrainians desperately want closer ties to Europe not for the national interest, but for themselves — more open borders would make it easier for many to work and live in the West. And for many educated and ambitious youth, opportunities in still-struggling Western Europe far outweigh their poor prospects at home.

Ukraine can't loosen its borders until its interior is relatively stable: that means a decent economy, functioning infrastructure and reduced public violence, at the least. If it opens up before these conditions are met, it risks the exodus of its youth — the very people national growth depends on (and who, even today, form a steady stream of émigrés). The pro-EU argument assumes that all needed changes can happen at once — and bring in cleaner government, to boot.

But the EU offered far too little, and perhaps underestimated the challenges it faced. The free-trade agreement would have given Ukraine a steady flow of goods to and from the West, and some loans. But this was not enough to make up for the loss of trade with

Russia, which would inevitably follow any EU deal. Nor would it compensate for retaliation in the form of a hike in gas prices. (Ukraine is a heavy user of natural gas, and relies on Russia for a large part of the supply.)

Let's not forget the fate of some of the EU's poorer members. Looking at the politico-economic quagmire still happening in Greece, and high unemployment in Spain, Ukraine can be forgiven for not seeing an immediate short-term benefit in a EU relationship; nor in the IMF loans offered that would have put the country on a "diet." The long-term benefits would likely be considerable, but Ukraine is hardly in a position to make good long-term decisions. Russia's \$15 billion was sorely needed, and it's hard to see when the desperation will end.

Now that the protesters have an official target on their back, their fate is up in the air. The most satisfying end — electing new leaders — is unlikely, even if early elections are called, because there's no united opposition candidate. Reformers have fleeting lives on Ukraine's political stage, and it's unlikely this time would be different.

*Irina Ivanova is a Ukrainian émigré and journalist living in New York.*



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# A Dream Team of NFL Non-Conformists

By JOHN TARLETON

Green Bay Packers head coach Vince Lombardi is famous for saying, “winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.” The quintessential NFL coach, Lombardi led the Packers to victories in the first two Super Bowls in 1967 and 1968. Two years later he died of cancer at the age of 56.

As the Super Bowl comes to New York for the first time, Lombardi’s win-at-all-cost mentality still suffuses the NFL and is matched only by the league’s relentless drive to sell itself.

Super Bowl XLVIII is slated to be played in the Meadowlands on February 2. Before the players take the field, we will be treated to “Super Bowl Week,” a marathon exercise in PR and branding for all things NFL that is expected to draw more

than a million people. When the game is over, the Vince Lombardi Trophy will be given to the winning team. As a counterpoint, here’s *The Independent’s* all-time NFL non-conformist team — rebels, idealists and iconoclasts who would make Lombardi spin in his grave and remind us that there’s more to life than winning.

**DALLAS COWBOYS, WASHINGTON REDSKINS**  
**1970–1974**


Led by icy cool head coach Tom Landry, the Dallas Cowboys of the 1970s were the IBM of the NFL — consistently churning out winning teams while carefully cultivating a conservative, buttoned-down image. Duane Thomas was having none of that.

The team’s star running back derided Landry as a “plastic man” and Cowboys management for being “lily white.” Thomas rushed for 95 yards and a touchdown to lead the Cowboys to victory in Super Bowl VI in 1972. He’s probably more remembered, however, for his response to a reporter’s question before the game inquiring as to how excited he was to appear in the Super Bowl. “If it’s the ultimate game,” Thomas replied, “how come they’re playing it again next year?”

**DUANE THOMAS • RUNNING BACK**

**JONATHAN MARTIN • OFFENSIVE LINEMAN**


Offensive linemen rarely make national headlines. Jonathan Martin did that and more when he left the Miami Dolphins midway through the 2013 season after repeated bullying by an older teammate, Richie Incognito. Among other things, Incognito is accused of leaving racially charged death threats on Martin’s voicemail at the encouragement of Dolphin coaches who were hoping the abuse would “toughen up” Martin. Instead, Martin spoke out, sparking a “national conversation” about workplace bullying.

**MIAMI DOLPHINS**  
**2012–2013**

**JIM BROWN • RUNNING BACK**

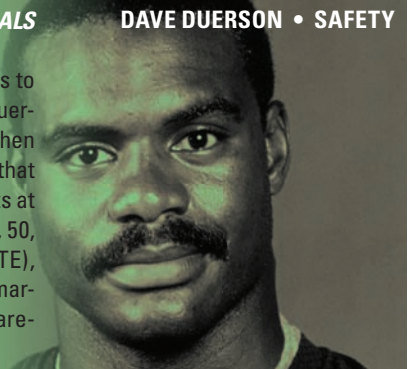
Jim Brown was the NFL’s all-time leader in rushing and touchdowns when he stunned the football world by retiring at the age of 30 to pursue an acting career. Brown went on to star in dozens of action movies, but his greatest impact has been as an activist. He organized other athletes to support Muhammad Ali when the heavyweight champ was stripped of his title in 1967 for refusing to be drafted by the military. When gang violence erupted in Southern California in the 1980s, Brown founded Amer-I-Can, an organization that works to defuse gang wars and teach members life skills.

“Capitalistic society teaches kids to be No. 1,” Brown told the *New York Daily News* in 2006, “but true self-esteem doesn’t come from money. It doesn’t come from winning the Super Bowl.”

**CLEVELAND BROWNS**  
**1957–1965**


**CHICAGO BEARS, NEW YORK GIANTS, ARIZONA CARDINALS**  
**1983–1993**

Football players are encouraged throughout their careers to sacrifice for the team. A former All-Pro safety, Dave Duerson took that ethos to another level in February 2011 when he committed suicide by shooting himself in the chest so that his brain could be used for medical research. Neurologists at Boston University subsequently confirmed that Duerson, 50, suffered from the chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), which is linked to concussions. Hailed as “football’s first martyr” by *Time*, Duerson’s final gesture helped increase awareness about brain injuries suffered by football players.

**DAVE DUERSON • SAFETY**

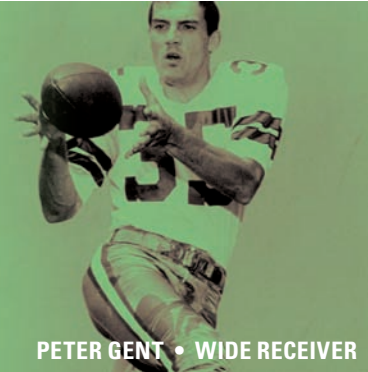
**CHRIS KLUWE • PUNTER**

NFL punters only get noticed when they screw up, or in Chris Kluwe’s case, when he began to speak out publicly last season in favor of same-sex marriage equality. Kluwe was released by the Vikings after the 2012 season and failed to land with another team this year. On January 2, Kluwe published a letter on deadspin.com (“I Was an NFL Player Until I was Fired by Two Cowards and a Bigot”) denouncing the Vikings front office and coaching staff. He concluded his missive saying, “Never be afraid to do what’s right. If no one ever says anything, nothing ever changes.”

**MINNESOTA VIKINGS**  
**2005–2012**


**DALLAS COWBOYS**  
**1964–1968**

During his five years in the NFL, Peter Gent cracked vertebrae, broke ribs, fractured a leg, dislocated an ankle, broke or dislocated every finger and broke his nose multiple times. In 1973, Gent spun the pain and the terror of the average NFL player into *North Dallas Forty*, a best-selling novel that spans eight days in the violent, debauched world of the fictional North Dallas Bulls football team. The book later became a movie starring Nick Nolte. Gent went on to write several more novels, though never with the same success. He died in 2011 at the age of 69.

**PETER GENT • WIDE RECEIVER**


**TIM TEBOW • QUARTERBACK**

OK, the former Heisman Trophy winner is a devout fundamentalist who writes the numbers of his favorite Biblical passages in the eye black beneath his eyes. He also has a huge following of rightwing Christians who think he is “God’s Quarterback.” But in the hedonistic world of the NFL, Tebow has stood out for being such a square. What other NFL quarterback, for instance, would proudly acknowledge he was still a virgin who was saving himself until marriage?

**DENVER BRONCOS, NEW YORK JETS**  
**2010–2012**


**SEATTLE SEAHAWKS**  
**2010–2013**

Pete Carroll is as competitive as any NFL head coach, but instead of ruling through fear and ridicule, he’s trying a novel approach: relentless positive thinking. His players have daily yoga classes and one of his assistants runs a meditation class. Players are fed fruits and vegetables from local organic farms and when they make mistakes, coaches instruct them without yelling. Last year the Seahawks made the playoffs after a string of losing seasons. As *The Independent* went to press, they were one win from heading to this year’s Super Bowl. Carroll thinks he is on the verge of revolutionizing the day-to-day culture of the NFL. He just may be right.

**PETE CARROLL • HEAD COACH**

**GAY CULVERHOUSE • TEAM PRESIDENT**

The daughter of former Tampa Bay Buccaneers owner Hugh Culverhouse and team president in her own right, Gay Culverhouse sought out former Buccaneers and was shocked by how badly many of them had deteriorated after leaving football. She published a book about her findings in 2009 (*Throwaway Players: Concussion Crisis from Pee Wee Football to the NFL*) and testified before Congress. She subsequently formed the Gay Culverhouse Players’ Outreach Program, Inc., whose mission is to help retired NFL players access the benefits to which they are entitled.

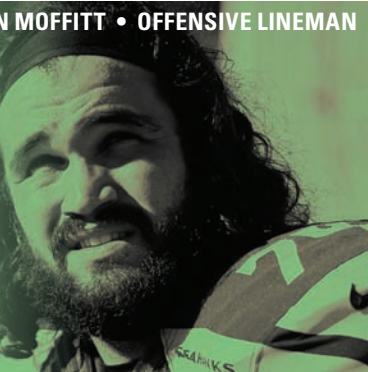
**TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS**  
**1991–1994**

**SEATTLE SEAHAWKS, DENVER BRONCOS**  
**2011–2013**

John Moffitt had a chance to go to the Super Bowl this season with the Denver Broncos but instead quit his job in early November, leaving \$1 million dollars in future salary earnings on the table.

“I just really thought about it and decided I’m not happy. I’m not happy at all,” Moffitt told the Associated Press. “And I think it’s really madness to risk your body, risk your well-being and risk your happiness for money.”

Moffitt, 27, said his decision to leave football was influenced in part by reading Noam Chomsky and the Dalai Lama.

**JOHN MOFFITT • OFFENSIVE LINEMAN**



## Betting the House

*Larceny Games*  
BY BRIAN TUOHY  
FERAL HOUSE, 2013

*Mob Boss, The Life of Little Al D'Arco, The Man Who Brought Down the Mafia*  
BY JERRY CAPECI AND TOM ROBBINS  
THOMAS DUNNE BOOKS, 2013

We root for our favorite NFL teams to express regional pride and to celebrate our tough, strong and powerful national character. Super Bowl Sundays past forged gridiron legends into our national folklore and featured roaring warplanes, field-length flags, classic rock, military recruitment commercials and marching bands. Some even call for Super Bowl Sunday to be a national holiday. This is why we play the game. Okay, that and billions of dollars in illegal gambling.

Humans have wagered on the outcome of sports for thousands of years, but modern gambling is defined by the “line” — a series of game predictions. Conceptualized in the 1930s by JFK’s math-teacher-turned-Chicago-bookmaker, the line redefined betting based not solely on the outcome, but also on the difference between the winning and losing scores known as the spread. The line is based on a series of calculations and public perceptions of who will win a game. Another gambling innovation occurred in the 1960s called the “over/under line” in which the bet is a wager on more or less total points scored as estimated by the bookmaker.

According to Brian Tuohy’s *Larceny Games*, it was not long before organized crime took control of illegal betting lines and installed Frank “Lefty” Rosenthal to run sports gambling in 1970s-era Las Vegas. Rosenthal, whom Robert DeNiro’s character in Martin Scorsese’s film *Casino* was based on, ran the massive Stardust sports betting operation, helping to create the modern casino sports book and sports bar aesthetic of multiple large-screen televisions running games and showcasing betting lines. Today bettors can use online sites largely based offshore in Caribbean, Asian and European countries, making a police crackdown difficult if not impossible. While newspapers and sports talk radio openly opine on point spreads, giving betting a veneer of legality, it should be clarified: most sports gambling is illegal. Tuohy touts a semi-useful report from 1999 showing illegal sports wagers amounted to between \$80 billion and \$380 billion a year. This



NBA PHOTO LIBRARY/NBAE

**SUSPECT:** Former Knicks guard Michael Ray Richardson was one of several Knicks who came under FBI scrutiny in 1982 for their role in an alleged point-shaving and game-fixing scam.

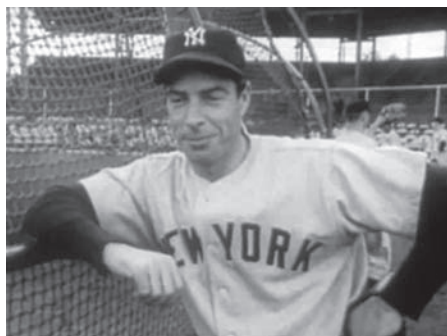
is in comparison to the \$2.5 billion that changes hands in Vegas.

*Larceny Games* posits that more professional sports matches are thrown than the public knows and it is not hard to change the outcome of games. A case in point is disgraced NBA referee Tim Donaghy, who made minor calls here and there to throw games. Tuohy’s strongest assertions are that professional sports promote the public perception that they are against sports betting but do little to combat its influence. Tuohy quotes sports gambling expert Larry Grossman: “Many people watch football just because of gambling ... When a team’s leading 17-7 and there’s three minutes left and there’s a touchdown point spread, you’re holding your audience for the advertisers on television, why are they holding the audience?” The answer: to see if your team beats the point spread.

Perhaps because of the shadowy nature of illegal gambling, *Larceny Games* sometimes slips into speculation. Tuohy relies on decades-old, heavily redacted law enforcement files to make somewhat convincing arguments that Luchese crime family money backed heavyweight champion Sonny Liston throwing his iconic 1964 bout against Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay). Other sports legends from the past who come under suspicion are Detroit Tigers slugger Hank Greenberg, who palled around with gangsters, and Joltin’ Joe DiMaggio, whose Cosa Nostra benefactors supplied him with prostitutes when the Yankees played on the road and may have benefitted from on-the-field hijinks in return.

A clearer documentation of law breaking is *Mob Boss* by New York journalists Tom Robbins and Jerry Capeci. *Mob Boss* is the biography of former acting Luchese crime family chief Alfonso “Little Al” D’Arco and is loaded with labor racketeering, graft, murder and, of course, Italian food and nicknames.

Movies depict mafiosi as glamorous but code-bound soldiers and D’Arco positions himself in this old-school vein, opposing drug dealing and enforcing mafia morals in prison. Robbins and Capeci present a sympathetic character even as



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**JOE DIMAGGIO:** Baseball legend was friendly with the mob.

the working-class Brooklyn-born D’Arco conspires with business executives to make labor strife go away and helps the mob bilk the city’s public housing authority by supplying a million windows at inflated costs.

D’Arco — like the characters in the Italian film *Gomorrah* — was not glamorous. He lived in publicly subsidized housing and participated in the dirty work of illegal toxic dumping. He didn’t care for Gambino boss John Gotti’s flash and steered clear of the Little Italy-based Ravenite Social Club, even though he operated a well-reviewed Italian ristorante in the neighborhood. Robbins and Capeci gamble successfully on a tonal shift mid-way through the book, when D’Arco begins carrying out the multiplying murderous orders of Luchese crime family bosses Vic Amuso and Anthony “Gaspipe” Casso. A low-profile wiseguy turns into a killer and “the blood got not only on his hands,” the authors write, “it got all over his body.” D’Arco murders and murders again like a character in a Sopranos greatest hits YouTube video.

Though D’Arco is certain to live through the Luchese bloodletting, the reader sticks by Little Al to the end, when he suspects he’s next in line to get whacked and turns state’s witness. *Mob Boss* fully delivers on all the mafia tropes including the secretive induction scenarios.

“He’d [Frankie Pearl Federico] gone gray waiting to be made ... Federico ... suffered the deep gashes from Robert Kubecka’s nails as he fought for life. The mob didn’t give Purple Hearts. But it did award buttons.”

Why do Americans love mafia tales? *Mob Boss* is the latest answer to the question.

— BENNETT BAUMER

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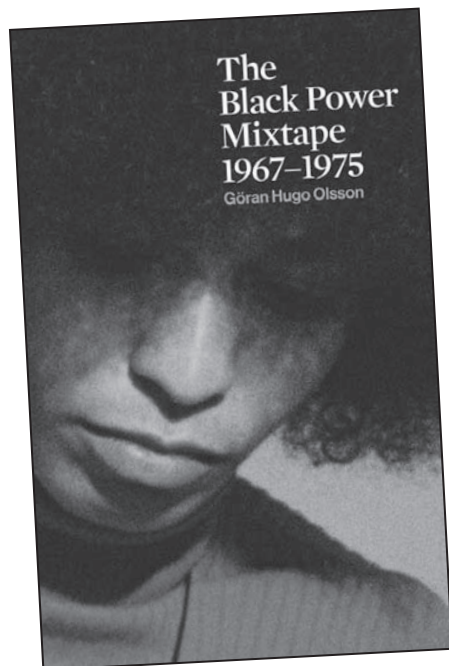
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## BOOKS

# American as Apple Pie

*The "S" Word: A Short History of an American Tradition...Socialism*  
By JOHN NICHOLS  
VERSO, 2011

*Imagine: Living in a Socialist USA*  
EDITED BY FRANCES GOLDIN, DEBBIE SMITH, MICHAEL STEVEN SMITH  
HARPER PERENNIAL, 2013

When Tom Paine died, no cemetery would take his remains. The great revolutionary whose ideas framed the Declaration of Independence was deemed unclean by the new nation's emerging religious and political elites, so he was buried on an isolated plot. His bones were then dug up by a friend, brought to England and promptly lost. Nor was it the last grave robbing that Paine would suffer. Witness Glenn Beck's grotesque book *Common Sense*, the talking-head author of which poses as an inheritor of Paine's revolutionary democratic legacy. Why not? If Jesus can be sold as a friend of the rich, a trope common in the 1920s and again today, then why not Paine?

John Nichols, Washington correspondent for *The Nation*, masterfully uses Beck's body-snatching as the lead-in to *The "S" Word, A Short History of an American Tradition...Socialism*. Nichols demonstrates the thick red line connecting Paine to today's real radicals, a legacy of freedom and equality often overlooked or denied, but whose revolutionary ardor is repeated in every generation. For Nichols, the United States, far from being dominated by an uncontested plutocracy, had a resistance movement, too. It wasn't a foreign import, besotted with violence. It was a logical response to oppression and still is.

It's a movement that included working people in Philadelphia and New York as early as 1832. The movement included Fanny Wright, the daughter of a Paine acolyte, who in the 1830s was already a dedicated abolitionist and feminist. Its numbers included veterans of the failed 1848 revolutions that rocked Europe before being put down. Among these were intimates of Karl Marx who served as high-ranking Union officers during the Civil War. It also featured Horace Greeley, publisher of *The New York Tribune*, the *Times* of its day, who was not only a fierce abolitionist and Lincoln advisor but also a publisher of Marx's

voluminous dispatches from Europe.

Then there was Victor Berger, the Milwaukee socialist and congressman whose election was overturned twice by Congress and who was re-elected again and by bigger margins, even against a candidate backed by the two major parties. There's also Eugene Debs, the Socialist leader imprisoned by a Democratic president for opposing World War I, only to be pardoned by a Republican, and Emma Goldman, expelled from the country also for opposing that war.

Nichols writes with brio about A. Philip Randolph, the African-American socialist editor who organized the first national union of black workers at a time when unions were whites only. Randolph would go on to organize the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, whose concluding speaker, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., believed, as his wife Coretta Scott King attested, that he "knew that the basic problem in our society had to do with economic justice."

For Nichols, socialism is as American as maize. Or Wisconsin bratwurst.

Just don't look for direction from him. The closer he comes to today, the more comfortable he seems with conventional politics. Certainly, praise for our radical forbears is due in part to their work in expanding political rights. But socialism is about more; it's about contesting power to cripple the profit regime and end the profit system. If you want to tell the story of the expansion of economic justice, of real class mobility and income equality, leaving it at rights is like living life at the level of food and water.



CHRISTINE LARSEN

They are necessary, but far from sufficient. As Irish union leader James Connolly put it, "For our demands most moderate are, we only want the earth."

Nichols confuses outcomes with goals. So while he ably argues the legitimacy of socialism as rooted in the American experience and the practical necessity of opposing those corporate moguls once known as economic royalists, the contributors to *Imagine: Living in a Socialist USA* tackle what Nichols leaves out. Its 33 activists, scholars and writers chart capitalist mayhem and imagine in compelling ways what a genuinely democratic socialism could be. Some even think through how to get from here to there. The pieces are different but not discordant, and are, as the title suggests, richly thoughtful imaginings of what an alternative, cooperative society would render possible.

While some of the contributors counsel building parties and organizing at the workplace, and others lean toward prefiguring a better future in the present through institutions such as workers cooperatives, all insist that socialism is the only alternative to a ghoulish system bent on its own destruction. When Paul Street weighs in on "Capitalism: The Real Enemy," it's with a precision and succinctness that alone is worth the price of the book. Added to that is Michael Zweig's November 2011 address to the participants of Occupy Wall Street in Zuccotti Park, in which he goes deep into the metaphors of the 99% versus the 1% to sketch out "The Working Class Majority" and ex-

Continued on page 16



# Health Care Drama Takes the Stage

INTERVIEW BY  
ASHLEY MARINACCIO

**F**orty-seven million Americans without health care coverage. Another 40 million with inadequate coverage. Two million medical bankruptcies per year. Soaring premiums and co-pays that can suck many thousands of dollars per year out of family budgets. The sheer enormity of our health care crisis can anesthetize us to the status quo.

For those who go to see *Mercy Killers*, a one-man play being staged this month by the labor union-backed Working Theater, any such indifference is swept away. The show returns health care to the level of the individual as Broadway veteran Michael Milligan plays Joe, a patriotic, blue-collar American whose pursuit of life, liberty and happiness is suddenly interrupted by his uninsured wife's cancer diagnosis. Milligan is the play's author, and healing of a different sort is also on his mind.

"We walk around with an existential experience that we're ultimately alone if we get sick," says Milligan. "We are traumatized and don't know it."

**ASHLEY MARINACCIO:** What inspired you to create a piece on the American health care system?

**MICHAEL MILLIGAN:** Initially it was my own personal experience with the health care system and shepherding one of my dear friends through it after he had a mental breakdown and was homeless and needed medical care. It was astounding to me how difficult it was. Later when I was three weeks into being without health insurance for the first time in my adult life as a professional, I was in the middle of doing a play reading when I started passing kidney stones. I had to excuse myself at intermission. It was horrible. I did what I think a lot of people in America have been doing which is going on webmd.com, sticking in your symptoms and diagnosing yourself. My next Google search was how much it would cost me to go to the emergency room and get an ambulance and that number was around \$8,000 for the trip and average emergency room visit for something like that. I stacked Tylenol and Ibuprofen. That night I thought, it's time to write that play I've been thinking about.

I had an awakening experience participating in Occupy Wall Street. That experience was seeing other people who are similar to me, who are struggling and realizing how people get so consumed in their own struggle for survival, whether it's be-

cause of a medical crisis or losing a job, that the idea of joining together in a larger movement doesn't occur to us because we are just trying to keep our heads above water, and that's a tragic irony because in many cases that's what we need to do — is come together and address things as a community. I was arrested at Occupy Wall Street. It was unplanned.

**AM:** *Mercy Killers* takes place in an interrogation room. Did your arrest during Occupy inform where you chose to set the play?

**MM:** It didn't, but while sitting in jail I had some extraordinary conversations with the other guys who were there — who represented a huge spectrum of people from very young to older, someone from Cape Cod, a special ed teacher from Brooklyn, a former Marine who had been stationed at Guantánamo for four years. Being in there, having

conversations and experiencing the huge difference between the reality of Occupy Wall Street and how it was portrayed in the media was a huge awakening. That certainly informed this piece.

Through Occupy Wall Street I was connected to Occupy Town Hall in Central Park and the Health Care for the 99% working group. I met a lot of great people there from Healthcare-Now! and Physicians for a National Health Program and become involved in the organizations. They will be tabling at the show.

**AM:** What has your process been in creating the show from its inception to now? How has your background in classical theater informed your work?

**MM:** After Juilliard I took the more traditional path, which is to go do regional theater and audition and sit by the phone and I did have many

extraordinary experiences from that. I've been writing plays since I was in school, but haven't been able to get them produced. I was on the treadmill of when I'd be underemployed in NY, I'd do readings of my plays, but then I'd get a job in St. Louis or Charlotte and wasn't able to properly follow through and create momentum for my writing. That felt unsatisfying. This piece was intentionally written as a one-man show so I could just do it as opposed to wait for someone to come along and do it. And that's what I did. I'd call up health care activists in the city I was working in and come and do my show. I had such a good time.

**AM:** Why theater as opposed to TV, film or any other media that's taken over the world? What do you think people get from theater that they may not from other methods

*Continued on next page*



**LOOKING FOR ANSWERS:** In *Mercy Killers*, Michael Milligan's character is blindsided by his wife's cancer diagnosis.

## JANUARY/ FEBRUARY THEATER LISTINGS

### FIRE THIS TIME FESTIVAL

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Now in its fifth year, this festival provides a platform for talented early-career playwrights of African and African-American descent to explore new voices, styles and challenging new directions for 21st century performing arts in order to move beyond common misconceptions of what's possible in "black theater."

Jan. 20–Feb. 3

THE KRAINE THEATER

85 E 4th St b/w Second Ave & Bowery  
Tickets & showtimes are available at [horseTRADE.info](http://horseTRADE.info)

### ISLAND GIRLS

WRITTEN BY BARBARA KAHN &  
NOELLE LUSANE

DIRECTED BY ROBERT GONZALES, JR.  
PRESENTED BY THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY  
Before *Orange Is the New Black*, women in 1927 were incarcerated in the Women's Penitentiary on Welfare Island. On what is now Roosevelt Island, the prison became a revolving door for many women from varying ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds who found themselves on the wrong side of the law. A newly-graduated social worker comes face to face with her own biases while she gets to know the prisoners.

Jan. 9–26

Thu–Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm

THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY

155 First Ave

Tickets: \$12, available via [theaterforthenewcity.net](http://theaterforthenewcity.net)

### MISS LEAD

WRITTEN BY MARY KATHRYN NAGLE

DIRECTED BY MADELINE SAYET

PRESENTED BY AMERINDA, INC.

After just one semester away from college, Katie is forced to return home to the Tri-State Mining area to grapple with a debilitating illness. Just as she is diagnosed with a crippling auto-immune disease, the Environmental Protection Agency arrives at her home and finds the yard has high levels of lead. Her father, head of the Tri-State Mining Company, refuses to allow the EPA to remove the contaminated soil. While in the hospital, Katie meets

a member of the Quapaw Tribe, forcing her to reconcile her dismissal of her own Native roots. She learns that her illness, as well as her identity, is inextricably woven into the soil of the land.

Jan. 16–26

Tue–Thu, 7:15pm; Fri–Sat, 8:15pm; Sun, 3:15pm

59E59 THEATERS

59 E 59th St

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### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SOVIET UNION

WRITTEN BY VLADIMIR ZELEVINSKY

DIRECTED BY JACQUES STEWART

PRESENTED BY THE HIVE THEATRE

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Jan. 16–Feb. 1

Wed, 8pm; Thu & Fri, 8pm; Sat, 3pm & 8pm;

Sun, 3pm

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### DR. DU BOIS AND MISS OVINGTON

WRITTEN BY CLARE COSS

DIRECTED BY GABRIELLE L. KURLANDER

PRESENTED BY CASTILLO THEATRE

Dr. Du Bois and Miss Ovington captures the two esteemed founders of the NAACP in a moment of crisis in 1915—when Du Bois submits his letter of resignation. Du Bois, educator, human rights activist, African-American visionary leader, and Ovington, a white Unitarian, granddaughter of abolitionists and outspoken justice advocate, spar, flirt, clash, reveal secrets, and compete to save their vital work.

Jan. 17–Feb. 16

Thu–Sat, 7:30pm; Sat & Sun, 2pm

CASTILLO THEATRE

543 W. 42nd St

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— Listings provided by ROBERT GONYO and the GO SEE A SHOW! podcast, [goseeshowpodcast.com](http://goseeshowpodcast.com)



# Gender Benders Rock Their Fenders

BY DAVID MEADOW

On Saturday, January 4, Little Waist, a Brooklyn-based outfit, kicked off a show at The Rock Shop. The band's music is a curious amalgam of sounds that the members identify as "pop-punk/Lanacore" — a reference to their acknowledged influence, chanteuse Lana Del Rey. Most observers can detect some 1990's riot grrrl in Little Waist's DNA, and

one reviewer of a Punk Island gig even found a touch of surf rock.

The grungy, sludgy guitar of sometime-poet Audrey Zee Whitesides is the dominant texture here, in twisty single lines and monster chords. Her warbling voice, by turns angsty and contemptuous, rides high above it. However, the lovely dark-basement swirl of the music, echoing and thudding, is what truly stays with you.

Little Waist often shares bills with queer- or trans\*-dominated bands, and this show worked well for it. The Rock Shop, converted into a music space four years ago from the Park Slope lesbian club Cattyshack, is resolutely eclectic, once hosting a trio with Thurston Moore and an all-female Rage Against the Machine cover band. Coming months will bring singer-songwriter Chris Pureka and an all-female mariachi group. Whitesides, a proud queer trans woman,



says that she's excited to "bring some lesbian energy back to the place" and that "it always feels cool to fill places up with queers — but especially nice given the location's history!" The sound quality of The Rock Shop impressed a band more accustomed to DIY events, with their squalid basements and microphones plugged directly into guitar amps — Whitesides remarked it was "weird to actually hear everything we were playing."

A band can benefit from a great sound system, but in the end it fails or succeeds on actual musicianship. On that count, drummer Nick Delahaye delivers. He produced a huge sound on the Rock Shop stage. While the cavernous miking of the toms helped, Delahaye also knows how to throw in the right riffs, as a song builds, to describe the contours of a rhythm

and emphasize its bigness, holding back until it's time to really lay on and wail — in straight four-four time or with the more jarring centrifugal force of a displaced snare.

Bassist Emmet Moeller looks every bit the defiant, no-nonsense rocker with his giant T-pose, legs forming one thin still tree and arms bowed expansively outward, a look of "Don't mess with me; I'm concentrating" on his face. He is actually discreetly disciplined on his Fender, nailing down curt yet limpid arpeggios to anchor the chaotic wash of Whitesides' guitar, and the rhythm holds firm and all is well.

Then there is the brains behind the outfit, Ms. Whitesides. Her singing is raw and direct, and it really works for some of the excruciating territory she explores. (There was even a sort of rockabilly backslap effect on her voice that night, but, dammit, it *worked*.) A great deal of the lyrics concern the relentless pressure of impossible de-



**ON FIRE:** (from left to right) Drummer Nick Delahaye, bassist Emmet Moeller and guitarist Audrey Zee Whitesides perform at The Rock Shop.

cisions that Whitesides must make to navigate public spaces while keeping body, soul, hormones and dignity together — deciding, in various situations, whether she can or should "pass," and whether she can or should make a stink about the latest incident of cruel dismissal. (In one song, she speaks fondly of a special dive bar as "The only place where I can get some quiet/A place where my words ain't such a fuckin' riot!")

Elsewhere, she asks again and again rhetorically, "Do you know what it feels like speaking in two voices every day?" And it's only rhetorical: she knows the target of the question can't really know. We hear these themes from a number of trans\* artists, but they don't all hammer it home quite this starkly. Together, these songs are a collective warning to anyone who takes the privileges of their gender (even modest ones) for granted.

The question remains: what makes this music *poppish*? Is it the vocal passages with a self-consciously snotty nasal whine? (It would be very hard to mistake Little Waist for any of the cheesy Top

40 acts that employ said whine). Is it the link to Lana Del Rey? (We know that Del Rey employs lush strings and other 1960's lounge elements, but there's nothing lush or loungey here). Artists reserve the right to define themselves, but of course sometimes an incongruous definition is intentionally subversive.

Maybe Little Waist offers a more expansive definition of pop — repurposed, reappropriated, gleaned from here/there/everywhere in a wild pastiche, queered. I submit that what I saw was wounded but defiant rock in the great American tradition: an indictment and a wake-up call.

*Curious about what the asterisk in trans\* means? While the term "transgender" was preferred for the better part of the last 20 years, its suffix can easily call to mind the male/female binary. "Trans\*" seeks to widen the scope of the term by deliberately encompassing all non-cisgender identities, including but not limited to transgender, genderqueer, genderfluid, transsexual, non-gendered, bigender, genderfuck and more.*

## American Socialism

Continued from page 14

actly who "us" and "them" are. Among other invigorating contributions is one from Steven Wishnia, a frequent *Independent* contributor, who looks at how debilitating drug use or alcoholism could be handled from the standpoint of economic and social justice and harm reduction rather than today's ham-fisted and racially-constructed social control mechanisms. *Independent* co-founder Arun Gupta is on target too, exploring ways to establish a socially sustainable food system.

Dianne Feeley connects De-

troit's decline not only to rampant racism but also to the lack of democratic planning on a local, national and global scale. Meanwhile, Harriet Fraad and Tess Fraad Wolfe opine on what the sphere of personal, emotional and sexual life could be like if private capital accumulation were not the dominant force binding relationships, while Leslie Cagan and Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz's analysis of queer life illustrates that socialism by definition can't be limited to altering the work regime and the profit system.

Socialist Paul LeBlanc makes clear that debates over reform and revolution are not counter-

poised but are "part of the same process," quoting Rosa Luxemburg that the movement to upend capital sees "the struggle for social reforms as its means, and the social revolution as its aim."

There's more. My conclusion: read both these books. They're better together.

— MICHAEL HIRSCH

## Theater

Continued from previous page

of communication?

**MM:** I think of myself as a health care worker as there is something about artists that work in the health care of the soul. This play is a purgation of a social sickness that we have, that we're unaware of. Americans are unaware of the sickness that lies in our psyche and our disregard for one another in how we are treated by the health care system. Things are changing. We walk around with an existential experience that we're ultimately alone if we get sick. People in other countries don't walk

around like that and we're completely unaware. I see this play as an exorcism of that deep psychic wound that we carry with us. We are traumatized and don't know it.

*Mercy Killers is being performed through February 2 at the Stella Adler Studio Theater at 31 West 27th St., 2nd Fl. It is also being performed at the United Federation of Teachers Bronx Borough Office February 5-7, 9 and at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3 headquarters in Flushing, Queens February 11-16. For more information see [theworkingtheater.org/mercykillers/schedule](http://theworkingtheater.org/mercykillers/schedule).*



# STILL DREAMING FRANCES GOLDIN AND THE BOOK SHE HAD TO HAVE

BY JOHN TARLETON

**W**hen Frances Goldin moved from Queens to the Lower East Side as a young woman in 1944, she took to the culturally diverse neighborhood and its leftist politics like a fish to water.

"It was nirvana," she recalled recently as she sat at her kitchen table, a wisp of purple lighting up the front of her short, silver hair.

In the years that followed her arrival on the Lower East Side, Goldin ran for a spot in the State Legislature on the same American Labor Party ticket as W.E.B. Du Bois, successfully battled Robert Moses over the future of her neighborhood and raised a family. She also built a career as a successful literary agent whose achievements include launching Live from Death Row, the book by former Black Panther and Pennsylvania death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal that brought him international renown

"I want books that change the world," she said. "If you look in the literary marketplace, there must be 300-400 agents but there is only one who says I handle nothing racist, sexist, ageist or pornographic."

Goldin's 70 years on the Left haven't dented her innate optimism. But like many others she is deeply troubled by the rightward shift in U.S. politics and the growing influence of the super-wealthy. Now 89, Goldin says she has two goals left that she wants to realize in her life — publishing *Imagine: Living in a Socialist USA* and freeing Mumia. Anything she makes from sales of the former, she says, will go to help fund work on the latter.

**JOHN TARLETON:** Why publish a book about socialism in 2014?

**FRANCES GOLDIN:** Things in this country are getting much worse. Instead of becoming a more open, democratic country, we are becoming less so. For example, some states are bringing back voting restrictions for blacks. It's insane. We already won that battle. So if the Koch brothers and the right wing can try to take us

back 50 years in time, why can't we go forward 50 years to a socialist USA? From the way people vote, I think they are unhappy with what's going on. And I thought, what if we pulled together a book that said, "Imagine living in a socialist USA" and clarified what it means to have a socialist country?

I knew it would be a big job so I called my comrades Michael and Debby Smith. They thought it was a great idea and agreed to work on it with me. I then went to HarperCollins twice and they told me "No" each time. I contacted them a third time and said, "I have given you the best fiction writer in the country in Barbara Kingsolver. And I have given you a children's book, *Goodnight Moon*, that has sold more copies than any book in the world except the Bible, and you have the nerve to say no to me?"

So the vice president of HarperCollins picks up the phone and says, "Frances, your passion and your persistence have won out. We'll do it." So that's how I got my publisher. (Laughter) And from then on it's history.

**JT:** You've been a literary agent for a long time. Do you think this book is going to be a success?

**FG:** The reviews have shocked me. They have been wonderful. Many of the writers in this book are professors. They are taking copies to academic conventions or making it required reading at their colleges. I think that people are so fed up with what's wrong and want an opportunity to read an alternative and get the truth for a change instead of baloney.

**JT:** Capitalism and its underlying values of greed and competition are constantly glorified in our culture. Yet, you believe it's possible for us to shift away from that.

**FG:** Capitalism can't work. It's a system where you can never have enough. You always need more. It's why wealth is flowing upwards into the hands of the 1% while the average worker's real wages are less than they were 40 years ago. The nature of the system is to expand. It's why we are an empire. In time, all empires disappear. I just want it to happen faster.

**JT:** So what does socialism mean to you?

**FG:** Done properly, socialism is the highest form of democracy, because everything is decided by the people who are involved and there is no big boss or big government or anything that overrules their decision, whether it's how to run a factory or a neighborhood or how to get housing.

A true socialist country would not be like what happened in Russia nor in China. Then again, they didn't have the opportunities that we have here, the material abundance. I think the future is exciting and that once people are educated and they know there is an option other than capitalism, it's going to open their eyes to be more willing to struggle. The only way we are going to see a socialist USA is if the masses of people are in motion demanding it. It can't be handed down from above.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM *IMAGINE: LIVING IN A SOCIALIST USA*

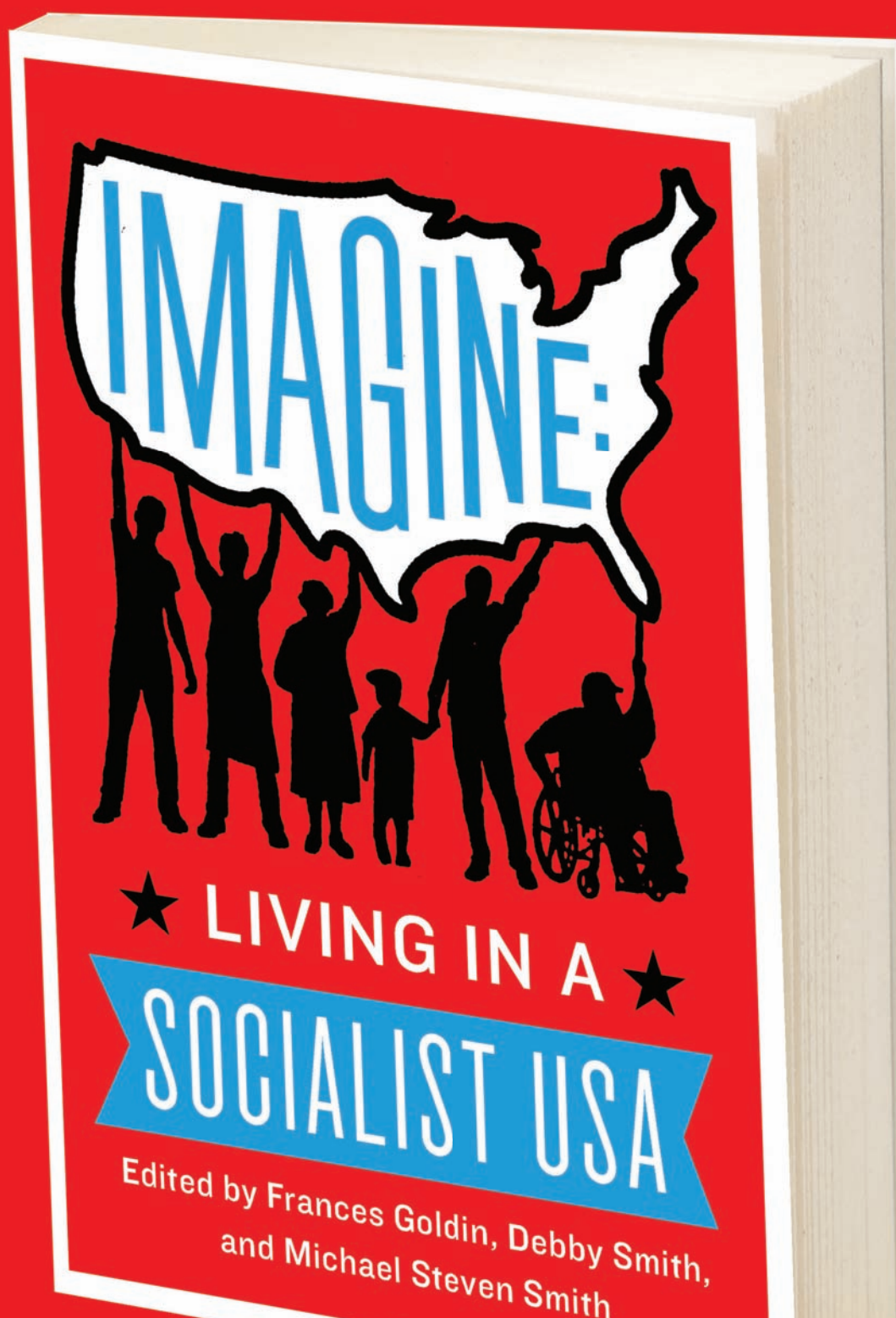
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# ★IMAGINE:★ LIVING IN A SOCIALIST USA

Edited by Frances Goldin, Debby Smith, and Michael Steven Smith

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